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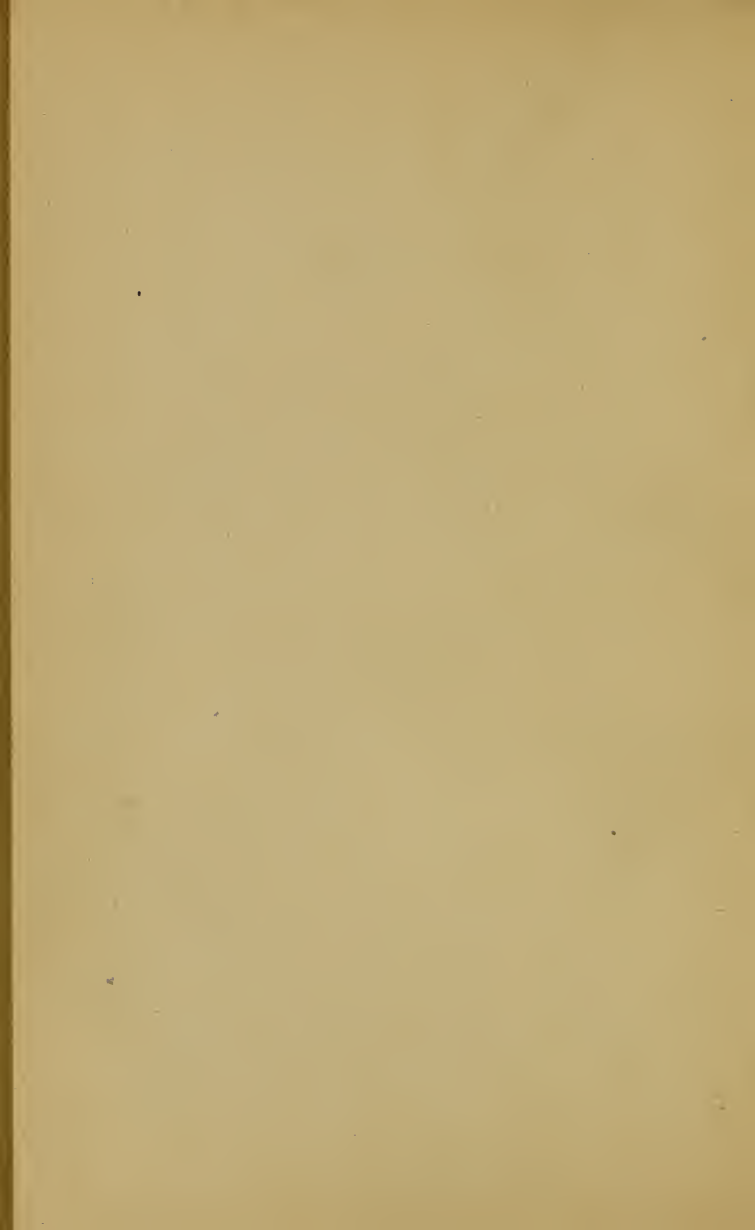
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



THE GREAT EVIL

AND ITS REMEDY;

OR,

Parental Responsibility in the Moral and Religious
Training of Children.

— ✓
BY REV. SAMUEL W. COPE,

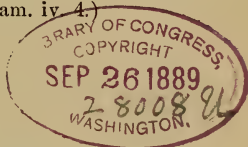
Of the Missouri Annual Conference of the Methodist
Episcopal Church, South.

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17
1810

“The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof
of his mouth for thirst: the young children ask bread, and
no man breaketh it unto them.” (Lam. iv. 4.)

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J. D. BARBEE, AGENT, NASHVILLE, TENN.

1889.

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To the Memory of My Dear Parents,
JAMES BOYD AND POLLY COPE,
A GOOD MAN AND WOMAN, EXCELLENT CITIZENS, WORTHY
CHURCH-MEMBERS, AND EXEMPLARY CHRISTIANS,
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY AND GRATEFULLY
Dedicated.

A WORD ABOUT OUR LITTLE BOOK.

It was at the close of our Annual Conference in September of 1887. I can never forget the time and place. The Conference had granted me a superannuated relation on account of my physical disabilities. I had stood in the itinerant ranks without a break for thirty-eight years. Blind in one eye, the vision of the other very dim and uncertain, the weight of other infirmities and of more than threescore years upon me, a family to support and no visible means in sight, the outlook was now any thing else than encouraging.

"Write a book this year," suggested the Rev. S. S. Hardin. The suggestion seemed opportune. There came with it a new impulse and inspiration. I took fresh courage. Hope revived, and I realized a sense of sweet peace and rest in God. I have written at intervals of days, sometimes of weeks together, a page or two as I had the sight and strength, often only a few lines at a sitting. I have not been able to consult authors, except to a very limited extent. Even the Bible quotations have been sought out with pain and difficulty. A more perfect vision would have given a less number of repetitions and other defects. I have done my best; an angel could do no more.

The object has been to make the treatise eminently Scriptural, practical, and useful. There is no pleasure, relish, or delight like that of doing good; and there is no good equal to that of saving a soul. Our little book is sent out as an agent to save souls. It will be specially helpful to parents in their own salvation and in the salvation of their children. With the desired circulation it will sow bountifully the good seed of the gospel. In this event, and with God's blessing upon the sowing, the harvest truly shall be plenteous.

SAMUEL W. COPE.

Chillicothe, Mo., March 26, 1889.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS little book has a history. Its author, Rev. Samuel W. Cope, is a superannuated member of the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. For a couple of years he has been almost totally blind, able to read only with difficulty and pain. Under such circumstances has the subject-matter so impressed the author that the volume grew under his pen. Not content with a single writing, he has rewritten the whole as his last testimony to the Church on a vital subject. A favorite theme when his health permitted him to preach, he avails himself of remaining sight and strength, as he nears three-score and ten, to write what he can no longer hope to preach. He is unwilling to remain idle, and his desire for usefulness overcomes his disabilities.

His own history illustrates the principles which he teaches. The frequent references to his devout parents will impress the reader most favorably. Their fidelity made it possible for him to serve the Church so long and well, and through him they, being dead, yet speak. He has sought to enforce the same teachings in his own home.

The present writer gratefully remembers the author as his first pastor, under whose ministry he became a member of the Church, and is glad to be permitted to write these few lines of introduction to this volume from his pen in his old age.

The teachings of this book are wholesome, and are in

accord with the Book. Parental fidelity is the safeguard alike of the home and the nation. There are laws of the moral harvest no less than of the material harvest: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." A gracious and constant providence rewards fidelity in whatever sphere, and nowhere more than in the faithful training of children. Especially important here is an abundant sowing, for he that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, but he that soweth abundantly shall reap also abundantly. The unwelcome work of replanting is frequently necessary to a successful harvest in the realm of grace no less than in that of nature. Then soil must be thoroughly taken with the good seed if we would keep out the tares. The suggestions as to how to perform the duties incumbent upon parents will be gladly received by all devout readers of this volume.

E. R. HENDRIX,

Kansas City, Mo., April 2, 1889.

CONTENTS.

Part First.—The Great Evil.

CHAPTER I.	PAGE
The Key to Our Subject.....	11
CHAPTER II.	
A Scene of Death by Starvation.....	15
CHAPTER III.	
The Similitude.....	22
CHAPTER IV.	
The State of the Heathen.....	27
CHAPTER V.	
Heathenism at Home.....	30

Part Second.—The Remedy.

CHAPTER I.	
The Starting-point.....	49
CHAPTER II.	
The Mother the First Teacher.....	58
CHAPTER III.	
The Home Altar.....	68
CHAPTER IV.	
The Sunday-school.....	83
CHAPTER V.	
The Living Ministry.....	94
CHAPTER VI.	
The Pressing Inquiry.....	119

Part Third.—Miscellaneous.

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	
The Possibilities to Children.....	129
CHAPTER II.	
Obedience in Children.....	137
CHAPTER III.	
The Sunday Lock and Key.....	144
CHAPTER IV.	
The Apron-string of Mothers.....	148
CHAPTER V.	
On Joining the Church When Young.....	152
CHAPTER VI.	
Moral and Legal Rights.....	155
CHAPTER VII.	
A Pledge to Meet in Heaven.....	159

PART FIRST.

THE GREAT EVIL.

(9)



CHAPTER I.

The Key to Our Subject.

JERUSALEM, the capital of Judea, the once populous and prosperous city of the Jews, now lies in ruins. Living converts and numerous proselytes crowded the gates of Zion in the days of her prosperity. The Holy One of Israel was in the midst of her. The Lord blessed and honored his Church. She was then, as now, the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Jerusalem, the holy city, once the place and defense of the temple and of the worship of almighty God, is now forsaken by him and abandoned to the will and ravages of the enemies of his people. The time of her overthrow has come, and "there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." There is no eye to pity nor arm to save.

Jerusalem, which in the days of David and Solomon "was the metropolis of the whole Jewish kingdom" and the princess of the then surrounding nations, and from whom she received large tribute, is now herself in bondage "to a foreign and heathen conqueror." Her glory has departed, and she is

shorn of her strength and beauty. She sits and weeps like a widow, "solitary on the ground, girded in sackcloth." She mourns in her sadness and deep grief, realizing her helpless and hopeless condition. She is without support, consolation, or defense. "How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!"

Jerusalem, in contrast with the other and the surrounding nations, as the fine gold in comparison with the other and the baser metals, is thus lamented by the prophet: "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street!'

The whole land of Judea, once a holy land, is now polluted and overshadowed by dark clouds of a portentous character; and the chosen people of God, once a holy nation, but now defiled by sin, with none to defend or comfort them, are led captive, as some suppose *en masse*, to a strange land, even unto Babylon. "Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits." The judgments of God have overtaken a disobedient and rebellious nation, and for long,

weary years they are in bondage and servitude to their adversaries. Their affliction and consequent wretchedness and ruin are beyond the power of human language to express. Neither tongue nor pen can describe the dreadful calamities which have come upon them. God only can fathom their sorrow. They have sinned, and behold their sins have found them out. "Murder will out," and so of all other sins. The rule holds good alike with individuals and nations. On this subject we quote the language of the Master to his disciples: "For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known." The law of God cannot be violated with impunity; the infliction of the penalty is sure to follow in every case of disobedience. "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?" So he that sinneth, whether against God or man, must suffer the consequence of his transgressions. There is no possibility or way of escape.

To sin, however secretly, in the belief that no harm will come of it, is a delusion and snare of the devil. Many are misled and ensnared in this way, in the loss of their health, their wealth, their lives, and their souls. Beware of sin! Solomon says: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is

the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." It is written, again: "As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

The facts I have given, not to pursue the subject further, show something of the nature, workings, and consequences of sin, both to individuals and nations, here and hereafter. Nations having no existence in the hereafter receive the full punishment for their sins in this life.

Sin is a great evil, and in this fact is found the key to our subject. I shall have to do in this little treatise not so much with the problem of evil as such as with the evil itself as I find it in the world. Each and every sin is an evil, and for this reason all sin should be avoided as a deadly poison. Parents who neglect the moral and religious training of their children are guilty of one of the greatest evils of which we have any knowledge. And this is the class and manner of evil about which we are specially concerned in this writing.

CHAPTER II.

A Scene of Death by Starvation.

CONNECTED with the facts and wonderful events recorded in the first chapter is a scene of actual death by starvation of multiplied hundreds and thousands. Immediately prior to the desolation of the Holy Land, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the captivity of which I have spoken, a raging famine spreads its withering, blighting curses over the already doomed city. With this famine there came pestilence, and preceding these there was war and bloodshed in the land, with great distress and trouble. Calamities of almost every shape have come upon the city and the surrounding country. The famine rages with continued and increased violence, until great multitudes are slain as men fall on the battle-field. They are seen lying in heaps, with no one to pity or bury them. The strong men, the helpless women, and the innocent children perish together. It is literally true, as expressed by the prophet Jeremiah: "The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them." Surely a death like this

is more terrible than when it comes in the ordinary way. Death under the most favorable circumstances brings with it sorrow and sadness of heart, with pain and grief of mind—a grief “which none but he who feels it knows.” Flowing tears and the sympathy of friends bring some relief, but only the presence and grace of God can calm the tide of bereavement and keep the head above the billowy waves. Much more do we need the promises of the gospel and the consolations of religion, standing in the midst of the ravages of death from starvation. If the members of my family and my neighbor must die, and I must witness the scene, let it not be for the lack of bread, but in the more natural and ordinary way—by sickness, casualty, and other common and familiar agents less terrible than war, pestilence, and famine. And when I am to die give me in preference to die at home, surrounded by family and sympathizing friends, and the attending, skillful physician to mitigate my sufferings in the dying hour.

To die of starvation is certainly a grievous death, miserable, wretched, calamitous—doubly so when helpless women and innocent children are its victims. Sad indeed is the sight of a mother languishing, fainting, dying for the want of food. In this condition she cannot nurse and nourish the infant at her breast, and it too must die. “The tongue of

the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of its mouth for thirst." The father, in a like condition of starvation with the mother, turns a deaf ear to the cry of his children for something to eat. "The young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them." No man—no, not their own father; even he fails them in the dying hour. This is a deplorable condition of things, but there is no help for it. These parents are not unnatural, not wanting in love and good will toward their children, but in the ability to save either themselves or their children.

I have never witnessed a scene of death from starvation, and pray God that I may never behold such a sight. It seems next to impossible that there should ever be a famine in this country, a land so fruitful and so vast and varied in its resources. If any one should prophesy of a coming famine in North America, he would be considered as beside himself, a fanatic. I am not a prophet, and do not prophesy, but I profess to have fears for my country, for the prosperity and safety of the nation. War, famine, and pestilence are the natural and inevitable consequences of incorrigible wickedness in a nation. Many and grievous are the sins of this nation. The signs of the times are ominous. Threatening dangers are ahead. Men in high places and in low places are eager to get rich, covetous, lovers of money and of pleasure more than

lovers of God. Again, many are ambitious of place and power, not for the glory of God in their own good and the good of others. This were well enough. But they are self-seekers, securing their own personal ends, together with the selfish and wicked purposes of their special friends. Oftentimes their traitorous plots work great mischief. There are frauds, bribery, and other corruptions in political circles, and in State and National affairs. The greatest criminals we have are in high places—men who are in the market to be bought and sold, who stand ready to sacrifice morals, religion, every thing for gain of wealth, of power, of honor, and for perpetuity in office. I am glad to know that there are some honorable and worthy exceptions.

The conflict between capital and labor is a cause of great alarm. These, who ought to be fast friends, are the worst of enemies. In this conflict we find antagonizing elements and despotic forces which threaten the security, prosperity, and happiness of the whole country. In this state of things there is great danger of anarchy in its worst forms. The end is not yet.

There are also others, mostly of foreign birth, who evidently desire and are seeking to subvert our civil government. Open threats have already been made. True they are as yet few in numbers, and

there is no cause of immediate danger. But the most dreadful things may be developed from this source in the future. I think it right at this time, and the least that I can do, to sound the note of alarm. With these surroundings, and in the face of these facts, some are found who are indifferent, and others will even laugh at such suggestions of danger. But while they do so the heaven is at work, and the calamities are coming on with all their direful consequences. Only God can avert or prevent them.

I mention in this connection the whisky traffic. The manufacture, sale, and use of intoxicants as a beverage are among the most open and powerful enemies of mankind.

And the next great evil along this line is the use of tobacco as a needless self-indulgence. This is a crafty, subtle adversary. Considered so generally as innocent, it is the more dangerous. These two evils are a blighting curse upon our civil and religious institutions and liberties. They endanger the prosperity and happiness both of individuals and the country. They tend alike, each in its own way and measure, to poverty and disgrace. The husband and father who uses whisky and tobacco is sure in the end to bring a famine of bread to his wife and children. This, at least, is the legitimate result of his wicked habits. In this country to-day,

and for these reasons, thousands of families would actually die of starvation but for the timely and benevolent help they receive from others. Their kindred, their neighbors, and the Church bring to them the necessary supplies. Unless the whisky rule is broken, and the present prevalent use of tobacco abandoned, there shall come increased and terrible sufferings in the land. I am not a fanatic on these questions, but I do say that whisky and tobacco are subversive of natural and moral rights, of civil and religious liberty. When whisky shall have been abolished from the nation, then shall the eyes of the people be opened to see what a great curse tobacco is, in its direful consequences not only to those who use it, but to their children's children. Tobacco as an evil will be hard to overcome, and as an enemy difficult to conquer. It has already great numbers and great wealth, and is strongly fortified by self-indulgence, the plea of innocence, and the popular sentiment of the people. The war with tobacco is likely to be as long and as fierce as the present conflict with the whisky traffic. But victory will turn on the side of right in the end.

Another ground of fear is the desecration of the holy Sabbath, commonly called Sunday. To say that we are a nation of Sabbath-breakers is not putting the question in too strong a light. It is sim-

ply the statement of a fact that it is not wise in us to ignore or to esteem lightly. To break the Sabbath habitually and of set purpose is a crime of enormous guilt, whether this be done by individuals or by corporations. There is no greater crime, not even excepting that of murder. There is no law of God more sacred or more binding than the law of the Sabbath. To violate this law, consequently, is the greatest offense against God; and no sin is more certain to call down the judgments of God upon a people. It is prolific of all manner of evil. A very large percentage of criminals of all classes come to prison and to death, directly or indirectly, from Sabbath-breaking.

This is a dark but not an overwrought picture, and constitutes the chief ground of our fears. In these surroundings is found just cause for alarm. There is no help but in God; the arm of man is too short and weak to bring deliverance. But while this is true, let no one mistake as to his or her duty. God has ordained to work through human agents. In no other way can his purposes be accomplished in the earth. Parents may do much in the interest of their children. Any good man or woman may be helpful in God's work. To work for God is a Christian duty.

CHAPTER III.

The Similitude.

THE scene of death from starvation at Jerusalem, as given in the preceding chapter, strikingly illustrates the moral and religious condition of many parents and children in the world, even within the bounds of Christendom. It is for this purpose that I have given it. These multitudes languish, faint, and die for lack of the bread of life.

If the bare recital of physical suffering and death produces in us great pain of mind and grief of heart, much more should we be moved by a scene of moral and religious destitution and suffering which destroys souls in greater numbers, and by a more grievous death.

Look upon the one scene, and then upon the other. If the first awakens all the sympathies of the human heart, much more should the latter arouse the moral sensibilities and spiritual sympathies of the soul. It is surprising how many of our race are morally dead; how few who know the living and true God. Ignorance of God is found in all lands, and among all kindreds and tongues of people.

To be convinced of this you have only to lift up your eyes and look abroad upon the face of the moral and religious world around you. Look near by, and then look far away; and both at home and abroad you will behold the most painful destitution and moral degradation and suffering. Millions of our race are living and dying in the midst of the darkness, superstitions, and wretchedness of paganism. As we contemplate their moral and religious condition we are again constrained to say: "The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them." Behold the scene, and let the sight of your eyes affect your heart. Contemplate the facts, and be moved by them. How deplorable the condition of a hungry, starving soul! There are hundreds and thousands of such who die annually; and where this state of things is found in Christian lands their condition is the more to be deplored. How much better off are many in this country than the poor heathen for whom we profess so much sympathy, and yet for whose enlightenment and salvation we do comparatively so little? I answer: Not a whit! Some of the most morally destitute and incorrigible sinners of this country are found living under the very shadow of our churches. Not that the Bible is false, religion untrue, or the gospel a fail-

ure. No, not that; for these are gloriously and immutably true—the grandest of all realities. Human enterprises and efforts may fail, and often do; but the enterprises and work of God never fail. These go forward to a sure and successful completion. The offer and possibility of salvation are made to every man. Where men are found unsaved the fault is in them, and not because of any defect or inefficiency in the gospel. The willful rejection of offered mercy is the only reason that any sinner should remain unsaved. And besides this, let it be remembered that we owe to the Bible and gospel our Christian civilization, our national peace, safety, and prosperity, and whatever else that tends to human happiness and to the elevation of mankind. But despising and rejecting the word and gospel of God, as many do, they are left in moral blindness, ignorance, and superstition. The grace of God is largely lost upon them in their personal, social, and national relations and interests. The children suffer with their parents in vice, degradation, and moral ruin. Loosed from their proper moorings, they drift away into the drinking-saloon, pleasure-dance, skating-rink, theater, opera, circus, gambling-dens, and into other and nameless places of prostitution, where all manner of lewdness and sinful indulgences are practiced. These are so many places and methods of the devil's own choos-

ing to lead men, women, and children down to death and hell! In this way hundreds and thousands are annually ensnared and destroyed. Young men and maidens are more inclined and exposed to many of these vices than others who are older and more settled in character and life. Consequently they need stronger restraints, and to be more strictly guarded than others. It is unfortunate for the children when parental love, authority, and fidelity are found on the wrong side of these questions. No one is safe outside of the fortifications of divine wisdom, love, and power. Without the mercy and grace of God all is lost. These are the only safeguards to the rising generation. Many parents seem slow to learn these facts, and still slower to act upon them. Again I ask: What is the difference between heathenism in this country and in foreign lands? The similitude is apparent even to the casual observer. There are places, parties, and associations in this Christian land of ours (and I have mentioned some of them) where the grossest idolatry exists. No greater abominations are committed among the heathen abroad. Here God is blasphemed, Jesus Christ is despised and set at naught, and the Christian religion spurned as a delusion. Many, even in early life, become so fortified in sin as to be impervious to the truths of the gospel, unmoved alike by the Spirit of God and

the entreaties of men. They seem greedy of their own destruction, and rejoice in the downfall of others. They make it their business to destroy good wherever it is found. Solomon says, "One sinner destroyeth much good;" but it is when sinners unite that they exert their greatest power for evil. This state of idolatry in Christian lands serves to show the power of sin, and that some persons *will do* wickedly in spite of God and all that is good.

Man is free to choose between holiness and sin, good and evil, right and wrong, light and darkness, life and death, heaven and hell; and according to his choice so shall it be unto him. Those who do not know and worship the true God are heathen, no matter in what country they live. In a Christian country they are such of choice. Man as a moral agent determines his own character, life, and destiny. Parents choose for their children while they are minors. That they may choose wisely in all things, they need the wisdom and grace of God. Thus assisted they shall not fail.

CHAPTER IV.

The State of the Heathen.

I HAVE already noted some facts upon this subject, but would seek further information, some additional light, and knowledge. If the reader please, we will now take a tour of observation through foreign countries, that we may learn by personal contact with them the true state of the heathen. We will go first to Japan, thence to China, India, Burmah, and Hindoostan, in Asia. From Asia we will pass through Europe on our way to Africa, visiting specially the interior and western portions of the Dark Continent. Next we will visit the principal islands of the sea, and from the South Sea islands we will go to South America. From thence we will return to our Christian homes in our own native land. In this tour we shall find multiplied millions of human beings who have never heard the name of Jesus, and who are without the Bible, the gospel, and a knowledge of the true God. They are pagan worshipers, wretched though earnest devotees, who bow down to and worship stocks and stones, the workmanship of their own hands. They deify reptiles, fishes of the

sea, and birds of the air. They pay adoration to the sun, the moon, and the stars. Nearly every living creature, and many inanimate things, real and imaginary, are deified and worshiped by these idolatrous kindreds, tongues, and people. Pagans are known throughout the world by the multiplicity of their gods. They are numbered by hundreds of millions, if not by tens of hundreds of millions. The state of the heathen is pitiable indeed. Just think of it! There are multiplied millions of our race who reverence and glorify these false deities, which can neither see nor hear nor handle nor deliver. Daily do they call upon them, but call in vain. Nor is this all. Connected with this idolatrous worship in heathen lands is almost every species of vice, of licentiousness, of intemperance, of revelry, and of debauch. Here untold flood-gates are lifted up or thrown wide open, and horrid abominations and inhuman cruelties and crimes, reaching even unto bloodshed, are like so many torrents sweeping over the land. These leave in their wake devastation, desolation, degradation, wretchedness, and ruin. This truly sad and mournful condition of the heathen world is enough to break a heart of stone, and to melt all eyes to tears. He who can behold a scene like this unmoved is surely past feeling, and without natural affection and human sympathy.

And he who can restrain prayer, and tie his purse-string against such a call for help is certainly destitute of Christian sympathy and without the constraining love of Christ in his heart moving him toward the suffering and the lost. Such persons, it would seem, ought to live, for a time at least, in the midst of pagan superstition and idolatry. The surroundings of such a state, with its wretchedness and suffering, might possibly bring them to reflection, and to a proper understanding and faithful discharge of duty. Some persons are slow to learn the lesson of God's wisdom and goodness, as taught in the gospel and recorded in his written word. But our God is merciful, long-suffering, and kind. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." For one I am glad to have been born and reared in a land of Bibles and of gospel privileges and benefits—a land of religious liberties and a Christian civilization, which come to all the people as benedictions of God's mercy and grace. Ours truly is a Christian country:

The land of the free and the home of the brave.

We may well boast of our civil and religious institutions and of the wealth and glory of the nation, only our boasting should be in the Lord. The great peace and prosperity of the Church is also cause of thanksgiving to our heavenly Father.

CHAPTER V.

Heathenism at Home.

THE state of the heathen in foreign countries was the subject of our last chapter. In this chapter the benighted condition of the heathen at home shall claim our attention. Notwithstanding the Bible is so generally circulated, and the gospel so extensively preached in this country, there is still in many places great moral destitution. Paul said of some in his day: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." A like state of things still exists. Any one who will open his eyes to the facts about him will be convinced of the truth of this statement. Reader, come and go with me, and we will first visit

THE TEMPLE OF FASHION.

Here we shall gather some interesting and important facts. The temple itself is magnificent, beautifully adorned within and without. In the estimation of the world the goddess presiding here is a most lovely being, and the altar is of the greatest attraction and beauty. The place is thronged with sincere and ardent worshipers. Their su-

preme affections are given to this goddess, and their time, talents, wealth, and opportunities are all consecrated on this altar. Many of them will not *even* share with God in these things. We look and wonder at their devotion and fidelity to a false god. Some of them are willing martyrs to their principles and sinful practices, glorying in their faith and dying in defense of their cause.

Stephen, the first Christian martyr, bears testimony in his death to the truth of the gospel. It is not strange that he should die for the name of Jesus. There is a cause that justifies and commends this act on his part. In no other way could he have entered into eternal life. But it is strange that men and women of intelligence, of rational understanding will sacrifice their lives to idols. Many do so under a delusion, not knowing what they do. They are blinded by sin, and led captive by Satan at his will. Others, I am persuaded, sin knowingly and recklessly, not caring for the consequences. The devotees of fashion act openly, and are seemingly proud of their folly. It is their glory to be seen of men. They love the praise of men more than the praise of God. No Christian is more devoted to the worship of the living and true God than they are to the frivolities of fashion. Many are found who worship a pretty face, a form, it may be, with symmetry of parts, and a dress

beautifully, tastefully, and fashionably made. They put on "gold, and pearls, and costly array." These are their gods. Their highest ambition is to be conformed to this world. They take a supreme delight in its maxims, customs, and pleasures. The costumes for the ball-room and other places of worldly entertainments must be in the latest styles of fashion, and all that pride, and wealth, and sinful indulgence may demand. The cost of time and money are nothing. Health, and even life itself, as we have stated, are cheerfully sacrificed at this shrine. Yes, and morality, religion, and the hope of heaven are ignored and set aside. These are considered as not worthy to be compared with self-gratification in worldly and sinful associations and pleasures. "Society! society!" They desire nothing more, and will be content with nothing less. Just now this form of idolatry is making itself very manifest, working the destruction of the body and the death of the soul on a large scale. This is true not only in the great cities, but in the towns and in the rural districts as well. The love, power, dominion, and evil consequences of fashionable society are simply amazing. They are terrible to behold. The infant child and the little children are endangered thereby. Unless the brakes are speedily put on there is but little hope in many circles. Christian par-

ents should take the alarm and stand in defense of their children. They may also reach out the hand and be instrumental in saving the children of others. Ministers of the gospel should cry aloud and spare not.

The Apostle John says: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." In the language of the Apostle Paul: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

But for the present we will turn away from this abomination. It is ensnaring and delusive in the extreme. Such folly is hateful to God and hurtful to man. Let us now proceed on our journey. Not far distant is another place of idolatrous worship, and it too is crowded with devotees. We will visit that next.

THE TEMPLE OF WEALTH.

This temple is beautiful, grand, magnificent, and of the largest proportions. Science, art, and human skill combine to make it attractive—a place of ease, of pleasure, and of worldly gains. Here we find a strongly-fortified shrine and a golden altar. The god of wealth, a being of great authority and power, sits upon the throne. We see men and women in great crowds, on their way to this temple, and all of them are in eager haste to get rich. Stopping now and then to rest, they wipe the perspiration from their heated brows. On reaching the consecrated place of their devotions they delight to do honor to their god. At this golden shrine they stately bow and worship, pouring out the sincere and warmest affections of their hearts. They linger at the altar in adoring reverence and gratitude. When their god smiles upon them in prosperity we see them leap and hear them shout for joy. They will be rich, even at the risk of being “drowned in destruction and perdition.” They are in pursuit of the almighty dollar, and will not be turned aside from their purpose. They love the world supremely, and are diligent in laying up treasures upon earth. They have no concern for their souls here or hereafter. “God is not in all their thoughts.” The Bible may be a good book, or it may be an old fable; it is all the same to them. They seldom, if

ever, read it, and never as the rule of their faith and practice. The gospel to them is the least and last of all things. If they hear it at all, it is only at the mouth of a popular speaker, some learned and eloquent divine; and then, only to be entertained, and not to be made wise unto salvation. This is a false idea of the gospel, and is a great hinderance to its success, especially when entertained by those who profess to believe and obey its precepts. Christian men and women, and sometimes Churches, as such, make complaint that their preacher is not a man of popular speech. Speech is the gift of God, and eloquent language and the great power of learning and oratory should not be undervalued. These have their place, their power, and their uses; but let the gospel be heard for its own sake, and as an instrument of personal salvation. Paul says: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." When a bishop or other great man fills the pulpit let the people crowd to hear, but let them not despise the gospel when preached by others of less note and ability. It is the same gospel by whomsoever preached; and it is the gospel that should interest us, rather than the manner of its proclamation.

Wealth in its proper place is a good thing—the

more the better—but when sought and obtained as an object of supreme good, supplanting the Bible and perverting the grace of God in the salvation of men, it becomes an evil, idolatrous and soul-destroying. It is a pitiable object to see a man with the world on his back, not able to look up to heaven, the source from whence cometh all our good. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” Wealth gotten by righteousness, and wisely used, is honoring to God and a blessing to mankind. It is so much treasure laid up in heaven. These are they who use the world as not abusing it. But to gain wealth by fraud, by overreaching, by oppressing the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the hireling in his wages, is a very different thing. It is still worse when gotten by lying, stealing, violence, and bloodshed. All such gains are dishonoring to man, as they are displeasing to God. Sooner or later the guilty parties will be overtaken by the greatest condemnation and punishment—if not in this life, certainly in the world which is to come.

But all these evils are being practiced in almost every place to a greater or less extent. The holy precepts of the gospel and the Bible rule of faith and practice are set at naught. The instituted

and prudential means of grace are counted as nothing. The personal piety and godly example of Christian men and women are treated with indifference, sometimes with derision. All appeals and efforts to secure their personal salvation are stoutly resisted. They seem insensible to the loving hearts and anxious concern of their best friends. In spite of all these mercies of God, interposed for their salvation, they still strive to be rich. Their eye and faith are resting upon the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them. They are under a delusion, but know it not.

Such are the beguiling nature of sin and its great power over the human mind and heart. There is no greater loss than that of the soul. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Earthly treasures are unsatisfying, and perish in their using; but the heavenly inheritance abideth forever. It is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and fadeth not away." It is our wisdom to choose this better part.

As Joshua said to the idolaters of his day so I say to the devotees of fashion and of wealth: "Now therefore put away the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel."

We will next visit

THE TEMPLE OF HONOR AND HUMAN GLORY.

This is the grandest and most costly of all the idolatrous temples found within the bounds of Christendom. It is beautiful for situation, and of great antiquity. The presiding deity is hoary with age, and of great pomp and magnificence. Men have bowed to the scepter of his authority and power in every age of the world. Counting from the beginning down to the present time, hundreds of thousands have worshiped him, and still they come to do homage at his feet. The numbers, perhaps, are not so great as those who crowd the temple of fashion and that of wealth, but they are not less ardent, sincere, and true in their worship. For the most part they are partisan, strong, ambitious men, seeking place and power. They seek the suffrages of the people in their elevation to offices of trust, of wealth, and of honor—not the honor that comes from God, but of men, worldly honor. This is the coveted boon they seek. Nor do they care for consequences; their only concern is to reach the end desired, whether that be by fair or foul means. Like those who will be rich, and those who conform to fashion at whatever cost, these will have glory and renown as objects of supreme good. It seems incredible that intelligent men should seek after such things, puerile and short-lived as they are, and utterly failing as they do in all their promises

of satisfaction and happiness. But that many office-seekers are of this class I presume no one will deny. Their natural and acquired abilities, their time and talents, their energies and means, are all used in this direction. They press their friends and every possible agency into service, and are careful that no opportunity shall be lost. They will have the honor of men, of place and power, or die in the struggle for it.

They seem to have no concern for the greater honor of being a child of God and an heir to eternal life. However honored or dishonored of men, the true Christian finds his supreme happiness in God. His highest ambition and greatest delight are in the fear and service of God, in the associations and fellowship of his saints, and in the joy of the Holy Ghost, and in the hope of heaven.

Human honor is proper and right in its place, and where the rights of God and man are respected it may be innocently sought and enjoyed. The evil is not in office nor in holding office; these are of God, a necessity and a benediction. Without these there could be no civil government, and consequently no security of either life or property. Only true men and good citizens, those who are capable and trustworthy, should be put into office. Men of this class will administer the affairs of civil government in righteousness, showing all good fidel-

ity to God and man. Such officers are the true servants of the country and of the Government which they so justly, wisely, and honorably represent. They are also, and for the same reasons, the servants of the Most High God, doing his will in the earth. These righteous rulers are not in any sense to be numbered with idolaters.

But there are men who for the sake of office and its emoluments will sacrifice principle, justice, equity, and every sacred right of God and man. They take pleasure in the god of honor and human glory, and him only will they serve. The claims of the true God are set aside and his judgments despised. Revealed religion is treated as a delusion, and future rewards and punishments as a myth.

I give an instance in illustration not of the imagination, but one taken from real life. He was a man amongst men—one of the greatest statesmen Missouri ever produced. He was in early life a Christian, a class-leader, and a Sunday-school superintendent and teacher. He ran well in the Christian race until the beginning of his political career. From this time he gradually lost his interest in the Church and in religious matters, and finally his official positions and membership. So the last state with him, as it has been with many others, was worse than the first.

His ambition and abilities as a statesman devel-

oped rapidly, and soon he appears in the political heavens as a star of the first magnitude. The admiration and praise of men are lavished upon him. Behold the man! a Senator in the Congress of the United States. There he stands in his place, a man of commanding appearance and of most excellent and wonderful endowments. In learning, in eloquence, and in human greatness and glory he is a tower of strength. We look again, but O how changed the scene! This once good and great man has fallen. As a statesman he is dead and buried, without the hope of a resurrection. The corruptions in politics, the appetite for strong drink, and his associations with godless, wicked men were among the agents which accomplished his ruin. Changing the figure, we will allow another to speak of him, and this is what he says: "He shot up into the political heaven like a meteor, the wonder of the nation, dazzling for a time the public gaze, and then suddenly went out in darkness." No wonder that a man should fall who forsakes God, the Church, religion, and his hope of heaven, giving himself up to the ways of sin and death. Destroy the foundations of Christianity, and remove the restraints of morality and religion, and men fall an easy prey to the world, the flesh, and the devil. Even men of the greatest intellectual powers and force of character are swept away by the flood-tide

of iniquity. Strong men, men of might, are broken to pieces like a potter's vessel. There is no security to any man except in the wisdom and grace of God. The instance we have cited is not an isolated one; history furnishes many others, and very similar cases in all the States, and throughout the world in all the ages past.

Men ambitious of renown climb step by step, higher and higher, until they reach the topmost pinnacle of fame. Here they would inscribe their names in golden letters, in imperishable characters, that they might live forever in the thought, the admiration, and the praise of men. Their chief glory is to be extolled by the present and held in everlasting remembrance by the generations to come. This is their happiness and their god.

Fame, immortal fame! "For this they thirst, they faint, they die." Alas! their affections are beguiled in the wrong direction, and their life-service given to a false god that ought to be given to the God of heaven. The desire for fame is right in itself, but can only be gratified in God. To seek the renown of a good name, one that shall never die, is a Christian virtue. The desire of immortality is common to man; it inheres in our being. God has implanted it there, and he has provided for its gratification. Nothing short of exaltation to the throne of God itself can satisfy the longings

of man's immortality, and of this the faithful Christian is assured by the promise of Christ: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." It is thus that man is made a partaker of "the eternal glory and universal reign of God." Through redeeming grace and dying love he is exalted to divine honors and to an imperishable renown. I confess to an ambition that my name shall be written not on the pinacles of fame, but in the Book of Life. My gracious heavenly Father granting me this, I am satisfied.

IMAGINARY TEMPLES AND ALTARS.

But we need not go to the thousand and one imaginary temples and altars where the phantoms and delusions of the day and the creatures purely of the imagination are deified and worshiped. The vices and superstitions of these places are too numerous and shameful to be mentioned. The reader's own knowledge and observations must supply our lack of service at this point. Happy are they who know nothing by personal contact and experience of these places, vices, and superstitions; perverse as they are of all that is good, and of all true happiness in this life, and for the life that is to come.

But this is not all. Connected with the idol-

atrous worship, as found within the bounds of Christendom, as in heathen lands, is every species of vice, of licentiousness, of intemperance, of revelry, and of debauch. Here, as there, the flood-gates of sin and iniquity are thrown open, and all manner of abominations and wickedness, like so many torrents, sweep over the land. These crimes of inhuman cruelties and bloodshed, of pain and anguish, of poverty and distress, of wretchedness and ruin, of suffering and death, all come of forsaking God and the ways of righteousness and true holiness. They are the legitimate consequences of idolatry, mercilessly destroying, as we have represented, like the overflow of great waters. Or, to change the figure, these agents and forces often come like so many cyclones of destruction. Sometimes they appear suddenly where there is the least suspicion of danger, and with such violence that there is no escape except through the immediate mercy and grace of God. He "is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." "But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off."

The greatest moral and religious destitution and suffering in this country are found in our larger towns and cities. Among the sufferers are a large number of innocent and helpless children. In the city of New York alone is a standing army of ten

thousand children who can neither read nor write, and who never go to Sunday-school or to Church. So stated a New York correspondent of the *St. Louis Christian Advocate*, some years ago. These children—and a like class to be found in all our cities—are as benighted and wretched as the heathen of foreign countries. Many of them are ignorant and degraded to the lowest degree. In the rural districts throughout the country we also find many who are under the power and dominion of the works of the flesh. They are without God and hope in the world. Morally and religiously they are in great destitution, languishing, fainting, dying. Once again we quote the language of the prophet: “The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst: the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them.” Why not? where are the parents? and why do they not come to the rescue of their children? Alas! they too are in a like condition of starvation. That is to say, dropping the figure, the parents are ungodly and wicked, and are alike indifferent to their own salvation and that of their children. That father and mother who are leading a life of sin and disobedience to God can have no proper concern for the religious well-being of their children. Whether the children are saved or lost, it is all the same to them. Certainly this is practically true, however

they may think and feel upon the subject. It is a sad state of things when parents lead their own children away from God and heaven and all that is good. There is no more pitiable sight than a godless family going together down to death and hell. It is enough to move an angel to tears. But there are great multitudes of such heathen in our own country; and it is difficult, in places next to impossible, for the Church to reach them. They are so sunken in crime, in guilt, and shame, that no ordinary means can reach them. Many of them will not hear or believe or obey the gospel; consequently they die in their sins. They perish for lack of the bread and water of life. This is a fearful death. The loss of the soul is terrible. There is nothing to equal it. Of all evils, real and imaginary, this is the greatest.

PART SECOND.

THE REMEDY.

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Prov. xxii. 6.)

“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” (Eph. vi. 4.)

CHAPTER I.

The Starting-point.

IN any enterprise much depends on the right commencement. Where, when, and how to begin are vital questions to success.

In the first part of this work I directed the reader's attention to a great evil—namely, the state of moral destitution and spiritual death of hundreds and thousands of our race, even within the bounds of Christendom. And the evil is to be doubly deplored because so many little children and young persons, male and female, are numbered among the unfortunate victims. Many of them are intelligent and promising, but perish for the lack of that knowledge and wisdom which come from God alone. Their associations and surroundings lead them away from God and from the paths of virtue and uprightness. Their delight is in the disobedience of the law of God. The ways of sin and iniquity are to them ways of pleasantness. They even revel in the vices and follies which are most degrading and shameful. They seem to hurry along and down the broad road whose terminus is in eternal death. Greedy of destruction, despising the admonitions of

the wise, and rejecting the truth, they seal their own perdition.

Parents who live in sin and who go down to death and hell take their children with them. This at least is the tendency, the legitimate result of such a course. Where it is otherwise it is a miracle of grace. Through ungodliness and the wicked lives of parents Satan destroys annually thousands of their own and the dear children of others. And many others, following their pernicious ways, are lost to the Church, to the cause of God and humanity, and in the end perish everlastingly.

Is there a remedy? What ought to be, what can, what must be done? Is there no hope? Shall our children go *en masse* to the devil, as did the Jews into Babylonish captivity? No, thank God! there is a remedy. Hope is not gone forever. The true God still lives and reigns, and he is wiser and greater than the gods of the heathen. And he is our God, our Trust and Hope. We will look unto him, and will not be afraid. He it is who leadeth us "in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." He will bless the generations to come of those who now fear and call upon his name. This gives a double motive to personal and parental piety. It shows the importance and the responsibilities of household religion. Christian parents who are blameless before God in love have the as-

surance that their children's children shall be found walking in their godly footsteps, and not in the way of the transgressor. This is the Bible rule, and I am not at liberty to make any exceptions to it. The seeming exceptions which now and then appear may be accounted for by some defect in the training. The children who are rightly taught of God by his appointed agents—the parents—are in a state of moral and religious safety. They walk in the way of God's holy commandments, in that strait and narrow way which leadeth to eternal life. "Brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," or, as expressed by Solomon, "trained up in the way they should go, when they are old they will not depart from it." The skeptic may shake his head doubtfully, and unbelief may make "the promise of God of none effect;" but this is what God says, and I believe God. "Have faith in God."

The starting-point in this work of training and of security to the children is with the parents. They are the responsible party. To keep our illustration in view: The infant children must have milk, and the young children bread. But parents who are themselves in a condition of starvation cannot supply the wants of their children. They can furnish them no nourishment whatever. They are powerless to protect and relieve the innocent, helpless

sufferers. This is simply a matter of fact which no one ever doubted or can doubt. And so irreligious parents, ungodly in heart as well as sinful in life, cannot teach their children the fear and service of God. How can they teach that of which they have no knowledge? And how can they impart to others that which they have not? They are themselves without the sincere milk of the word, the bread of life, and the strong meat of the gospel. How then can they furnish spiritual food and nourishment to their hungry, starving children? They cannot do so, because they have it not. The children may cry long and piteously in their destitution and suffering, but without help from the parents; for just so long as they live in sin just so long is it impossible for them to meet the wants of the soul in their children. For this reason, if for no other, parents ought to be religious, publicly confessing Christ and serving God "with a perfect heart and willing mind." A negative and merely nominal Christianity is not enough. All parents should be real Christians, positive, active, and obedient even unto death. It should be made manifest that they love God with a perfect heart, and that they are blameless in character and life. While diligent in business, let them be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." The character and life should correspond with the profession. Then, and not un-

til then, are parents prepared to teach their children the way of life and salvation.

THIS IS THE STARTING-POINT.

Often all is lost for the want of a right start, a good beginning. Let parents see to it that they begin right in the matter of training and bringing up their children in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." If they will lead the way to the cross, and thence to heaven, the children will follow. There is nothing doubtful or difficult at this point. The love and service which we render to God should of course be from principle and as a matter of right and duty, and because it is to the glory of God and to our present and eternal happiness. But for parents to be in the Church and in the service of God, for the sake of their children, is certainly not an impure or unworthy motive. It is simply and only an additional reason why they should conform in heart and life to the Divine requirements. Indeed it seems passing strange to me that parents believing the Bible should endanger both their own salvation and that of their children by continuing in sin. With my views upon the subject, I would be a Christian solely for the sake of my children. Yes, I would come to Jesus and cling to the cross even unto death, if that should be necessary to lead my children to salvation, and finally "to glory, honor, immortality,

and eternal life." If for any reason my personal salvation was to me a matter of indifference, if in the event of my death I did not care whether I was saved or lost, I should nevertheless be concerned for my children that they perish not. There can be no excuse for neglect of duty at this point.

I appeal to ungodly parents, and would urge them, if need be, by the love of God, by the death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ, and by the agency and power of the Holy Ghost; by the word, the gospel, and the Church of God; and lastly by parental responsibility and the love they bear to their children, to become religious, ceasing to do evil and learning to do well. This is a matter of too much importance to be treated with indifference or neglect. The motives to right and prompt action are numerous and weighty, and we would lay them on the heart and conscience of every parent who may read these pages.

Where so much is involved even religious parents need to have their pure minds stirred up by way of remembrance, and their hearts and lives quickened to renewed and greater energy and activity in the great work that God has enjoined upon them, in restraining their children from sin and evil of every kind, and leading them into the way of holiness unto eternal life. This question of parental godliness and responsibility can hardly be

unduly stressed. An error or failure at this point would prove a loss, possibly a disaster, to both parents and children.

It is a great work to save one's own children from the perdition of the ungodly, and to secure to them "an inheritance among those who are sanctified." The promptings of human love and the constraining love of Christ combined make this a most delightful work. It is the purpose of God by these high and weighty motives to fence in the children, that the wicked one touch them not.

Children are a token of God's love to the parents, a heritage from the Lord. We say *our* children, and so they are by the ties of nature, but in a pre-eminent sense they belong to God. The chief business, even of little children, is to love, serve, and please their heavenly Father. This should be the work and service of their whole lives. They should never be the servants of sin, that they "should obey it in the lusts thereof." Let them be taught that love and obedience to their parents is a service rendered to God, that what they do in any thing should be done with reference to God's glory. To this end God holds parents responsible; they are in the stead of God to their children. It is well, therefore, that parents should study and understand the nature and importance of the relations which they sustain to God and their children, and the

obligations and duties growing out of these relations.

Parents simply hold their children in trust to do the will of God. The consecration of children to God in infant baptism is a formal and scriptural acknowledgment on the part of the parents of this sacred trust. It involves an oath or religious vow that they will fulfill by God's help the trust committed to them. Some parents hesitate to take upon themselves these vows, for fear of failure in the right performance of the same. But they cannot dodge the issue in this way, for the duty is upon them whether they will acknowledge it or not. It is no small matter to a father and mother to have and to hold in trust for God's service and glory their own dear children. This trust binds them to keep the children within the limits of God's revealed will. Beyond this they may not go. In other words, parents are to teach their children "to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, so that they may not follow or be led by them; to believe all the articles of the Christian faith, and to obediently keep God's holy will and commandments all the days of their lives." The Bible is the only and sufficient rule both to parents and their children. Nor is this law and these duties a new order of things, "for they have been ever of old." "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou

shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." This is a beautiful as it is a striking picture of household religion, involving parental love and duty. The presence of God makes the paradise of such a family. A religious household is one of the purest and best types we have of heaven. It is the Church of God on earth. The Church, I know, has other outward forms, but this comes nearest to the divine pattern. Nothing is more sacred than the Christian home, and nothing should be more strictly guarded. It is the foundation and embodiment of all that is good amongst men in this world. *Amen.*

CHAPTER II.

The Mother the First Teacher.

THE mother has to do with the child from its birth. She has the care of all its wants—physical, intellectual, moral, and religious. During the period of its helpless infancy and young life her will is supreme, the only rule of faith and practice the child has; and it needs no other. The youngest infant and the one with the weakest intellect soon learns to confide in its mother. It looks to her for comfort, protection, and happiness. In her presence and caresses of love there is fullness of joy. The child is satisfied with nothing less, and desires nothing more. This confidence should never be betrayed, weakened, or perverted by the mother. The rather let every look and word and act of her life go to increase and strengthen the faith of the child. Self-will and disobedience in children must never be allowed. Much less should these be permitted to grow into a principle and habit of life. The mother's wishes should be their only will. The law of her mouth must be obeyed, only she should be careful to rule in the Lord. The principles of faith and obedience should be firmly established in

the mind and heart and in the character and life of infancy and childhood. In this case they will abide forever. This work, involving the most vital interests, is largely the responsibility of mothers. Let them see to it that the work is done according to the pattern given them in the word of God. It will then be comparatively an easy matter to further mature and develop these principles in later childhood and in early youth. The work is far easier and better done in these earlier stages of life than at a later period. The longer the work is delayed the greater the difficulty and the less satisfactory the results. It is the weakness of some mothers to please their children at whatever cost. Right or wrong, the child must be gratified. A mother, for instance, pays two dollars and fifty cents for a hymn-book. The little child covets and cries for it as a plaything. The mother for a time holds to the principles of right and duty in the case, but finally yields to the wishes of the child, and in less than an hour after the purchase the book is so soiled and mutilated as to be comparatively worthless. This would seem incredible, only that such conduct is so common with a certain class of mothers. This is one principal cause of perverseness in children. As the mother's authority is weakened, in that ratio the children become cross, fretful, peevish, and stubborn. The mother wonders why

she has such bad children, not even suspecting that she is the cause of their waywardness and disobedience. A mother's opportunities are always equal to her responsibilities, so that she is left without excuse if her children are froward in infancy and disobedient in childhood and youth. And as first impressions are the most lasting, and the mother most responsible for them, she should be very careful of her own character and life. She should be sound in doctrine and wholesome in all her teaching. Children as a rule are very much like their mothers for good or evil. Let the pattern which is given to them be worthy of their imitation. Molding the character and shaping the lives and destiny of children is the honored and great work of mothers. Let them not turn aside to the rostrum or to the pulpit. God has assigned to them a different sphere of action, and a work not less important in its nature and results.

Instance the mother of John and Charles Wesley. This is the type of woman to make the world better. Home is the proper sphere of woman, and here she should be ambitious to excel. No doubt Mrs. Wesley could have wrought a good work if she had gone into the pulpit, but not as great a work as she accomplished through her sons by staying at home. The women of all lands, and of all time to come, may learn an important lesson from this ex-

ample. In all this we say nothing against the woman's missionary work, nor the present work of women in the cause of temperance. The former seems to be of God, the latter a necessity, because in the past other and better methods have been neglected. If in the years gone by the temperance work in this country had been generally and well done, there could have been to-day no need for special efforts in this direction. If our mothers had done their duty in the home, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union had never existed, as no reasons would have been found for such an organization.

Here is a man who is now over sixty years of age, who never drank any kind of intoxicants in all his life, and who was never for any reason in a drinking-saloon. Why? Not that he was naturally better than other boys, or less enticed or endangered in his general surroundings. It was the home influence which saved him. He owes all under God to his pious parents. Other parents might do as much for their children. In this case there would be no necessity for legal prohibition; the temperance fight would soon be over. This is the prohibition most needed. These facts establish the doctrine of parental responsibility, and show where and when and how the work of educating and training should be done. Many parents, however, are skeptical on this subject, full of doubts and unbe-

lief, and especially as to child-religion. They seem to think that children are not capable of knowing and doing the will of God. Grown persons have the right, and it is their duty to be religious; but they deny such right and duty to childhood and early youth. The denial is more real and pronounced in practice than it is in theory. But the faith of parents and others is often stoutly against the children. Religion, which should be first, is the last thing of importance with many. In advance of divine knowledge children are taught their letters, how to spell, read, and write, and something of grammar, arithmetic, and other branches of science. This is wrong and damaging every way. It is a reversal of God's order of things. The first thing a child should learn is something about God, heaven, and hell. And what is easier learned or more important to children than the name and love of God, the name and love of Jesus, the name and beauties of heaven, the name and terrors of hell? Such knowledge may be imparted to them in a measure, even in advance of their knowing the alphabet.

An error or mistake, or any neglect or delay of duty at this point, may be seriously hurtful. All the parties involved must suffer the consequences to a greater or less extent: the parents, the children, the Church, the community, and the generations to come. Children, to the extent of their abilities and

opportunities, can as intelligently and scripturally love and serve God as the parents themselves, or the wisest philosopher on earth, or an angel of the highest rank and order in heaven. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." And shall the parents do the will of God, and their children walk by another rule? And if so, why? Parents and children are alike the subjects of moral government, and are equally and together bound to do the will of God. An illustration here is to the point.

A pious mother during the day teaches her little daughter, Ollie Dines, only a few years old, something of the being and perfections of God; that God is holy, wise, and good; that his throne is in heaven, but that he looks down to see the children of men, blessing those who trust in him; and that she must be a good child, and never displease the heavenly Father. In the evening of the same day the mother and child are standing at the door, just at the time the stars make their first appearance. Looking up and fixing her eyes on them, and remembering the lesson her mother had taught her in the morning, the child said: "Ma, I see the little holes in the sky, where God peeps through to see me." This was a simple and child-like expression, and possibly at the time brought a smile to the face of the mother. But how full of meaning are these words, when we stop to think upon them! Here we have the child's

idea of God's omniscience—very imperfect, it is true, of what God really is and of his method of seeing, but serving the same purpose to the child that the more perfect knowledge does to the mother. The mother knows that there is a God and that the Omniscient Eye is upon her. The little child knows that much. This knowledge on the part of the mother restrains her from evil and encourages her to do the things which are pleasing to God. As much may be affirmed of the child, although its knowledge is so limited and imperfect as compared with that of the mother or the Christian philosopher. The law requiring parents to know, love, and serve God is equally binding upon their children. Let them ever keep this fact in remembrance. In keeping the commandments of God there is great reward to parents. The same is true of their children when in their measure they walk by the same rule and mind the same things. This is preferable to the consequences of ignorance and sin, and parents are responsible for the choice and conduct of their children. And we insist upon it that home is the place, and infancy and childhood the time, to secure the salvation of children; bringing them into the Church, and directing them in the way of heaven. To delay this work is dangerous, and to attempt it without divine guidance is to fail. God's time and methods must be observed, and his

blessing sought. Our heavenly Father leading us, we cannot go astray. His grace imparted, and the Holy Spirit helping our infirmities, there can be no such thing as failure.

The child who thought the stars were little holes in the heavens through which God looked down to behold the children of men has grown to womanhood, and is now herself a mother; and right diligently is she teaching her children as she was taught. The same Bible and catechism her mother used are her text-books. She would have the prattling little ones about her knees and in her lap to know, love, and serve the same God to whom she gave her affections and service when but a child. In this way God is glorified in the salvation of souls, and his knowledge and fear perpetuated in the earth from generation to generation. Thus the good work goes on, and I can, yea, and I will rejoice. Bless the Lord! "and let all the people say, Amen."

Among the first recollections of my pious but now sainted mother are those connected with the moral and religious instructions which from day to day she so diligently and patiently imparted to her children. One thing deserves special mention: It was her regular custom to take the children to a private place of devotion, and there to pray with and for them, and talk to them about God and heaven, and the duty and importance of being

good and doing good. She had much to say about how God loves and blesses little children in this world, and how at last he gives them a home in heaven. These divinely-revealed and glorious truths were held up as so many worthy motives to right action. The lessons taught and the impressions made under the circumstances can never be forgotten. They endure forever.

The good accomplished in this way is the most desirable, durable, and important, as it is the largest in magnitude and the most wonderful in its results. I have passed the sixty-fourth anniversary of my birthday, and now that I am old and gray-headed I still feel the soft, tender hand of my angel mother on my head; and there it shall remain forever, a joy to God, a delight to the angels, and a well of life to me. Satan rages as I write these things, disappointed of his prey. But salvation is mine, and my glorified mother holds a jubilee in heaven. Mine is not an isolated case; there are thousands, if not millions, of such instances in the world. I give this paragraph, just clipped from the *Nashville Christian Advocate*:

PRAYING WITH CHILDREN.

The loving instruction of a mother may seem to have been thrown away, but it will appear after many days. "When I was a little child," said a good old man, "my mother used to bid me kneel down beside her, and place

her hand upon my head while she prayed. Ere I was old enough to know her worth she died, and I was left too much to my own guidance. Like others, I was inclined to evil passions, but often felt myself checked and, as it were, drawn back by a soft hand upon my head. When a young man I traveled in foreign lands, and was exposed to many temptations; but when I would have yielded that same hand was upon my head, and I was saved. I seemed to feel its pressure as in the happy days of infancy; and sometimes there came with it a voice in my heart, a voice that was obeyed: 'O do not this wickedness, my son, nor sin against God.'"—*Anonymous.*

The prayers of a pious mother, her counsels and godly life, never fail to bear good fruit. Showers of blessings descend to her children's children. These are facts, not fiction, and I put them to record in this place for the encouragement of the faith and to strengthen the purposes and efforts of all parents, and especially those who are young and inexperienced, but solicitous to do their whole duty. Let all such parents have willing help from every possible source. In infancy and early childhood the father can do but little, but later on his authority and work are a necessity. Without his co-operation the mother's work may be greatly hindered, possibly given up in despair. Let parents be doubly watchful and diligent at this point, lest Satan should get the advantage of them, and hinder, if not destroy, their work.

CHAPTER III.

The Home Altar.

I SHALL not argue the right nor yet the duty of family religion. This much will be conceded by all. The husband or head of the family is responsible for this service. He is the prophet, priest, and king of his own house. He is so ordained of God, who will hold him to a strict account in the faithful performance of his duty. The children look to him for the knowledge of the true God and of the way of life and salvation. The Bible is his principal text-book. Out of this book he is to teach the doctrines and fundamental principles of our holy Christianity—the precepts, promises, exhortations, and warnings of the gospel. This teaching at first is of course rudimental and limited, but not the less important on that account. Great care should be taken not to impart any false or incorrect ideas, but only the truth as it is revealed in Jesus. The instructions of Paul to Timothy are equally applicable and important to a patriarch or head of a family: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” With

the divine authority to teach comes the paternal right to govern, and as much depends on good discipline in the family as upon correct teaching. Like a bishop in the Church of God, the father and priest in the family should be blameless, "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity."

As the minister of the gospel is held to an account for the welfare of the Church and congregation he serves, so the head of a family is responsible for his household. As a priest he conducts the sacred service, bringing oblations of prayer and praise to God.

What Paul said of the duty and necessity of preaching the gospel may be truly affirmed of family prayers: "For though I pray morning and night in my family, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I pray not in my family." There can be found no purer or better place this side of heaven than a religious household. Here we find the sweetest and most delightful fellowship, the perfection of moral excellences and of the Christian virtues—first in the tender bud, then in the opening flower, and afterward in the abundant harvest of ripened fruit. The daily worship of a religious family is most pleasing to God, as we know it is delightful and profitable to the sincere worshipers. Holy angels,

if permitted to be present and participate in such service, would no doubt feel honored, and they would be the recipients of gracious benefits. How much more those for whom this service was specially ordained of God, and is so well adapted to secure the promised good in the desired results!

Regular hours should be established for this service, just as there must be in the necessity of the case appointed times for the social and public worship in the sanctuary. Many family altars have fallen down by violation of this rule. This should be a warning to others. We think the best time is in connection with the regular meals, just before or after eating. At these hours the children and others are generally near by. If these times are not convenient, establish other hours, that the whole family may understand and govern themselves accordingly. In no case should the time be left an open question ; and let every thing be subordinated to this holy and God-honored service. All the family, as far as practicable, should be present—parents, children, servants, visitors, and “the stranger that is within thy gates.” By this means a sojourner only for a night may be brought to Christ. If such a one is already a Christian, he will be strengthened in his faith and made to abound in the knowledge and love of God and to go on his way rejoicing in a brighter hope of heaven. Many

such instances are on record to encourage fidelity in family religion. Remember that what has been may be again; what others have done we may do. The work and reward of saving the soul of a stranger—or any soul, for that matter—involves high and worthy motives to Christian integrity and uprightness of conduct. Let there be corresponding desires and efforts, that no opportunities be lost.

It is advisable to select and study the Scripture lesson in advance. This will tend to secure a correct reading and interpretation. It is not enough that the Bible should be read in the family; the sense should be given. This cannot be done in full, as in a sermon from the pulpit, but only with comprehensive brevity. As we gather at the sanctuary, so we come around the family altar to be taught of God out of his holy word. The preacher in the pulpit and the patriarch in the household, each in his place, is the representative of God, to make known his will to those committed to their care. Let their interpretation of the Scriptures be to edification and salvation. In this way the children of Christian parents, like Timothy, may from childhood “know the holy Scriptures, which are able to make them wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

The lessons, songs, and prayers, as a rule, should be short and always appropriate. Ordinarily a les-

son of ten to twenty verses is sufficiently long. It is a weariness to the flesh and without profit to hear a long lesson read at every service.

I knew a brother at one time, a good man and a true Christian, whose family devotions were lengthy and tiresome. He would often light on the longest chapters in the Bible, and such as had the greatest number of hard words and names difficult of pronunciation. He was a slow and poor reader at best, and so the service, while to God's glory, was less inviting and profitable than it would have been under more favorable conditions. But the brother's integrity was firm unto the end; while he had a house God had an altar. And allow me to say this by way of application: Christian duty, however imperfectly performed, must never be omitted. In doing our best we are accepted of God. An angel could do nothing more. Thousands of families are without the home altar. Why? The want of ability is the plea. This is a delusion of the devil. Make the effort, and God will give the ability.

Singing is a vital part of family religion, and should seldom, if ever, be neglected. Let singing be the rule, and not to sing the exception. There is a benefit without the singing, but a larger benefit with it. The hymns should be short, and the singing lively and spiritual, and rendered not as an artistic performance, but as a service to God. There

is an inspiration and pleasing melody in the service of song, and a quickening power which nothing else can give. The work of family religion is always seriously hindered where there is no singing. In a large measure, if I mistake not, the want and decay of piety in religious households may be attributed to this source. It is better to pray without singing than not to pray at all, but it is always better to sing when we pray, whether in the family or in the social and public worship. The good brother was not far wrong who said: "I will permit no one to conduct family worship in my house who omits the singing."

There was a time within the recollection of the writer when it was as common to sing at family worship as to read a lesson from the Bible. All were expected to bear a part in the service of song—parents and children, old and young. I remember distinctly how embarrassed I was when a child, in taking up and bearing my cross in this line of duty. Now the order of things is changed, and the religious services of the family are for the most part conducted without singing. Those who stop to think and reason upon the subject see that this is a great mistake; it is marvelous in their eyes. The individual Christian, the family, and the Church, have sustained great loss at this point. This is beyond any doubt one of the devices of Satan to de-

stroy much good, lessening the attractions, the power, and the saving benefits of home religion. Singing in the family is quite as necessary and important as it is in "the house of the Lord." It would be ruinous to do away with the singing in the social and public services of the sanctuary, as everybody knows; and it cannot be less injurious to omit the singing in family worship. All the altars of God—public, social, and private—should be vocal with songs, "with hymns of love and praise." It is scarcely possible to say too much in favor of the service of song. It is attractive, delightful, inspiring, soul-reviving, and soul-saving. Surely this subject ought to be stressed at this time. Singing is an indispensable part of the family oblations. To omit it is to mar the beauty and lessen the good effects of the whole service. We all need and can ill afford to lose the personal benefits of this part of family religion. Where there is a cold, backslidden state of things the song-service will give energy, activity, courage, and new life and hope. It distills like the early dew and the gentle shower, and it is as refreshing "as cold water to a thirsty soul." Holy songs—the songs of Zion—have a wonderful power to strengthen the faith, enlarge the hope, and to make perfect in love the sincere and true worshiper. It is a potent and necessary means to our growth in grace. For these reasons we believe the Holy

Spirit is grieved in the so general neglect of singing at the family altar; but in this fact Satan and all the powers of darkness are made to rejoice. The omission of singing in the family accounts in a large measure for the defective singing in the congregation. If the families of the Church generally were accustomed to singing at home, it would give a new interest and inspiration to the service of song in the sanctuary. Many never sing at Church because they never or seldom ever sing at home; and when they do it is not as well done, for the want of home training and practice. I mention another specific reason in favor of the service of song—one which reaches beyond the river and connects with the life to come. The more and better we sing on earth the better prepared we will be to sing in heaven. This being true, the neglect of singing in the family will be an eternal loss. Let it be remembered that an opportunity once lost is never regained, and that the benefits of such opportunity, consequently, are gone forever. I might enlarge upon the subject, but forbear. The interests connected with it are manifold, far-reaching, and of incalculable importance. Their value can never be told. Let all those involved in neglect of duty break off their sins by righteousness; and let the faithful few still keep their white robes unspotted. To the Christian this is a good world, and it is the better for the

holy songs of the home altar. We will sing and make melody to God in our hearts and in our homes and in the courts of the Lord's house. "Praise ye the Lord."

As a rule long prayers should be discouraged, and especially repeating the same prayer every time, word for word. We give an illustration: A little boy is visiting a school-mate in a Christian family for the first time. At family prayer the two boys knel side by side. The prayer is long, and the home boy is soon asleep. The visiting boy, after a long waiting, gives him a nudge and whispers: "How much longer is your father going to pray?" In reply the boy asks: "Has he come to the Jews yet?" "Yes, he has just made mention of the Jews." "Then he is only half through the prayer." And the boy went to sleep again. Why should he keep awake? Long as the prayer is, he knows it by heart. Only a few, it may be, go to this extreme, but many lean too far in this direction. Such prayers mar the beauty and detract very much from the excellences and real worth of family religion. The ends or objects of the prayer are measurably lost in its sameness and great length. There is a vast and wonderful variety in our daily wants and surroundings, and this should give variety to our prayers. We should pray for just what we desire and need at the time, and this will give

us day by day a new prayer, with a different wording from the old. If any are unwilling to pray extemporaneously, let them use the prayer-book. Using prayers made to hand is better than not to pray at all. Nothing is better or more appropriate than the Lord's Prayer, and this any head of a family may soon learn to repeat. To do the best we can is all that God requires; but to do nothing—not even to attempt to pray in the family, as is the case with many—is a great wrong. God will not hold them guiltless. Offenders must suffer the penalty of the violated laws. The head of every family should lay these things to heart. Well-selected lessons, lively and spiritual songs, with short and appropriate prayers, will make family worship a joy and delight, a pleasure and a benefit, both to the parents and their children.

I remember with great satisfaction that I had a father who prayed daily in his family, morning and evening, and whose Christian character and life corresponded with his profession. The omission of family prayer at my father's house would have been a greater surprise to the children than to have gone without the daily meal. The quarterly fast was regularly observed, when two of the three daily meals were left out. Family prayer was never omitted. So I may say that there was more praying than eating in my father's house

when I was a boy. At times it is a benefit not to eat, but always a loss not to pray. Fidelity in erecting and maintaining a family altar is a duty and an honor to any father, and his children will rise up and call him blessed; and in return they are an honor to their father, their family, the Church, and the community. Yea, truly, such children are a blessing to the whole nation and to posterity after them. Say what you will, it is from this source that our best citizens and Church-members come, and the best of all classes of men and women in all the relations and employments of life. It is by this method that parents have good and obedient children and a desirable and lovely home. Children will appreciate the love and respect the authority of consistently pious parents. Parents should be very careful at every point in the moral and religious training of their children. Any neglect of duty or defect in their work may lead to very serious consequences. The parents who are not watchful and prayerful, and who are left at any time without the Divine guidance, are sure to fail. The word and methods of God never fail. The seeming or real failure at any time is not in God, but in man.

I mention one other thing of great importance. The children should be orderly and well-behaved at family prayers. Their conduct in this respect

depends entirely on the careful guidance and management of the parents. If trained aright, and at the right time, there will be no trouble. I give one of the simplest methods, the easiest and the best of which I have any knowledge—one that I know from experience and observation to work well. Begin with the first-born. Require not only the presence of the child, but have it bear some part at each service. Begin this work of training early. Put the yoke of the Master on the little prattling child in a practical way. This may be done as soon as the child is able to walk and play in and about the house. If not yoked for Christ then, it will likely go into the service and bondage of sin and Satan. The children, no less certainly than the parents, will serve one or the other of these masters. But which? The parents shall determine in any given case. But I imagine that some one will ask in surprise. "What can a little child do in the service of the Master? and what good can it derive therefrom?" Unbelief will answer that it can do nothing, and receive no personal benefit. And so under this double delusion the little child is not called to the family devotions. It is sent off in the hands of the nurse, or cared for by one of the older children; or, what is worse, when permitted to remain it is allowed to have its own way unrestrained, to the

great annoyance of every one present. But the little child *can* do something. Let us see. The mother is arranging for the service. The child can remove a stool or place a chair. It can bring the Bible and hymn-book and place them on the stand; or, what is better, place them in the hands of the father. Let this order be observed, and then the child, quietly seated by the mother, be required to remain there until the close of the service. A few weeks of such daily and faithful training, and the work is done. This good behavior in the child will soon become a fixed habit. The child knows *now* what is required of it. And as a rule children properly trained give their parents but little trouble. On the other hand, parents are generally to blame for the improprieties of their children. By observing this rule, training the children one by one, the most numerous family will be quiet and orderly, each keeping his place and bearing his part in the devotions. Even the domestic animals will come to understand, so that they will give no trouble or occasion of complaint. I agree with the evangelist, Sam P. Jones, that cats and dogs are a practical test of personal and family piety. He says that where prayers are offered in a family not accustomed to religious devotions the cats and dogs are surprised and alarmed, and the door being closed they will jump out at

the window to make good their escape. These things are not jokes, but of actual occurrence now and then. And worse than this, the children are sometimes as much alarmed as the domestic animals. I have known children so affrighted at religious worship conducted in the family by the visiting pastor as to cry out and leave the house as if it were on fire and they were in danger of being consumed in the flames. At one time, late in his life, when the venerable Andrew Monroe was praying in a certain family, one of the children coming in from school was greatly surprised at the scene, and running to her mother, she cried out: "Mamma, get up! what are you all doing down here on your knees?" This was the child of an eminent statesman, and her mother was a pious Christian woman; but the family, as such, did not worship God. There was no home altar. This was the only trouble. Such children are to be pitied in proportion to the blame attaching to their parents. And there are a large number of such families even among those who have nominal connection with the Church.

I here and now record my heart-felt thanks to God for Christian parents and the benefits of family religion from a child all my life. Let the family altar be perpetuated in all time to come. From generation to generation let the fires burn

thereon. The religion of the home represents and aggregates the piety of the Church. The altars of the Church are fed and kept up very largely by the home altar. Break this down, and experimental and practical godliness would soon cease from the land, and the whole superstructure of our Christian civilization would crumble and fall into ruins. May the God of all grace multiply the number, and bless all the Christian homes of our country, and let every pious soul labor to this end!

CHAPTER IV.

The Sunday-school.

THE Sunday-school is an important factor in the moral and religious training of children. Its principal work is to impart and perpetuate Bible knowledge, the most important of all knowledge. This gives the Sunday-school the pre-eminence over the day-school. Our children go to the latter; much more important is it that they should attend the former.

“To give children a good education in manners, arts, and science is important; to give them a religious education is indispensable; and an immense responsibility rests on parents and guardians who neglect these duties.”

The Sunday-school work fits in nicely with the home instruction and training; and it does so the more certainly and efficiently if the parents accompany their children *to* and are one with them *in* the school. The necessity is alike upon parents and children to be in regular attendance unless providentially hindered. Parents should not say, “Go,” but, “Come, children, and let us go to the Sunday-school.” I desire to honor my parents for their

fidelity in this work. It was a matter of principle and duty with them not only to attend the school, but to bear an active and full part in its labors and expenses. They led the way, and the children followed, and we were all there and on time. For all this I am surely a wiser and better man, a more devoted and useful Christian, and a more efficient and successful minister of the gospel. This record is not given in eulogy of my honored parents, but as a noble example "provoking others to love and good works." A summer Sunday-school is no doubt better than no school, on the principle that half a loaf is better than no bread; but a permanent organization, an evergreen school, is every way more desirable and fruitful of good.

What would you think of a Church hibernating, suspending the regular services during the winter months? As many and just as good reasons might be offered in justification of such action as for suspending the work of the Sunday-school four or five months in the year. To do so in either case would be unwise and hurtful. The Churches that have tried the experiment of suspending their Sunday-schools for the winter have found it unsafe and unsatisfactory. The practice, so common in many of the rural districts, is without justification. I am aware that it is claimed by some that the winter season is not suited to Sunday-school work; that the

weather as a rule is too cold and rigorous, and the children consequently too much exposed. This is simply and only an excuse; it has no foundation either in reason or fact. Many of these same children go regularly to the day-school. Why not to the Sunday-school? Query: Is the weather worse on Sunday than on other days of the week? Are life and health more endangered by exposure on the Sabbath-day than on a week-day? Let me give you a secret: The material expense is the principal difficulty in maintaining a Sunday-school in the winter. It requires more money to run the school in the winter than in the summer. It is also more difficult to procure regular teachers, to keep things in order, and to make those comfortable who attend.

I undertake to affirm as a fact: If the State would furnish the Church with Sunday-school superintendents and teachers, paying them a liberal salary, and paying all the other expenses, few if any places, even in the rural districts, would be found without an evergreen school. Do you not know that this material oiling would keep the machinery running smoothly the year round. Let it be understood at any given place that the house will be in order and comfortable, that the officers and teachers will severally be at their posts of duty, and that the literature and all other necessary sup-

plies will be free of charge. Give these assurances, and there will be no trouble in getting the children to attend our Sunday-schools during the winter months. And the old folks will cease to complain and to urge objections against the impracticability of Sunday-schools in the winter. In this case, you may depend on it the weather will not be in the way.

The truth is that for many reasons the winter is the better season of the year for both Sunday and day schools. These facts ought to lead some people to a better life. It is for the want of means and a comfortable place to meet that closes so many of our Sabbath-schools in the winter. This is simply the naked truth, which cannot be disguised or denied. That there are other reasons I do not deny, such as needless self-indulgence, and the lack of proper intelligence and interest on the subject. With some there is a want of enterprise, of will, and of energy to work for the Master. But after all, what is most needed is liberality—the grace of giving. It is not that the Church is poor, for she has great stores of wealth. But alas! she fails to tithe this wealth for God. I speak of the Church as a whole. Many individuals are up to the full measure of duty. O that the whole Church would do her duty, that God might be glorified in the salvation of much people! All our Sabbath-schools ought to

be evergreen schools. It was my good fortune when a child to belong to this class of schools, as also later in life. I have no recollection of attending a Sunday-school that went into winter quarters.

The perpetual life and success of a Sunday-school is often due to a few persons rather than to the whole Church. They will be satisfied with nothing less than an evergreen school, and labor diligently and with perseverance until the desired end is reached. It is marvelous what power and influence are exerted at times by an individual family or person who stands firm for the right and who is willing to lead the way at whatever sacrifice of time, of means, of labor, or of suffering. The Sunday-school, even with money and other facilities, may fail for the want of such leadership. A man in the Church with strong convictions, with intelligent and large views, with an acknowledged piety and blameless life, and with a consecrated purse and energy to do the will of God, is a host within himself. He quickens, inspires, and leads others to a better and a more active and useful life. They are moved forward to a greater diligence, and delight in the service of God and in the work of the Church. On the other hand, it is not difficult to find those who are a positive hinderance to the cause and work of God.

In many places there are no organized schools,

not even during the summer months. This is a matter of regret, and ought to have a speedy remedy. It is not wise to wait for the gathering together of great numbers. In many respects small schools are preferable and more prosperous than larger ones. A dozen children, more or less, are sufficient to begin with. In no case should the Church at any given place be content without a Sunday-school. Such a loss would not only work ill to her interests and prosperity, but to the community and to posterity. It will require time, labor, and money; but what if it does? Such expenditures always pay well. And the more liberal the outlay the more abundant the harvest. "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

The utility and reward of Sunday-school organization and work are much every way. There is much of morality and of Christian civilization in the Sabbath-school. It leads the rising generation to industry, honesty, and sobriety, and thus secures and perpetuates national wealth. It was on this ground that a noted infidel gave ten dollars annually to support a Sunday-school in the neighborhood where he lived. He declared that he saved more than this amount in apples and melons, which otherwise would have been stolen and destroyed by

reckless, bad boys. But these virtues and excellences are as nothing compared with its work of saving souls. The one great object of Sunday-school work is to lead the children to Christ, and to secure to them a happy Christian life and a home in heaven. Less than this would be dishonoring to God and to the Church, and be considered a failure in the eyes of the world.

The teachers, as far as possible and for this reason, should not only be members of the Church, but consistently pious Christians. They should be exemplary in character and life and truly and earnestly devoted to their work. Individuals of good morals, intelligent, and well-informed, but not personally pious, may teach with a measure of success. If this is the best that can be done at any given time and place, forbid them not. The Bible rule, however, is to teach both by precept and example. Those who teach the precepts of the gospel ought to enforce the same by a pure heart and godly life. We want Sunday-school teachers who are blameless before God in love, in fidelity, and in good works.

The pastor occupies the first and highest place in the Sunday-school. He ranks all others. This place and power of the pastor gives him an unlimited field of work and usefulness. As far as other duties will allow, therefore, he should always be

present. This is both desirable and helpful every way. The prosperity of the school is with him in a most vital sense. Great responsibilities are upon him, and he should neither shirk nor dodge the issue. I am aware that some differ with me on this subject, giving to the pastor a lower place and lesser responsibilities. With these I have no quarrel. Still I feel confident that I am right touching this question. I do not speak officially or authoritatively, but only from my understanding of the law and usage which should govern in all such cases. I do speak, and that confidently too, from experience and observation confirmed in the nature and fitness of things. We neither degrade nor dishonor the superintendent in this view of the subject. He is in all and over all the work, great in his authority and responsibilities. There is none greater than he except the pastor.

It is well to have an organized school with competent officers and teachers, and good books, papers, and other helps; but this is only the beginning or starting-point. The helps and facilities of the Sunday-school are one thing; their right use is another and quite a different thing. One may have all these only to be under the greater condemnation. The children must be taught this in a practical way, otherwise the benefits of the school will be largely lost upon them. Especially should they be

taught the duty and the importance of studying the lesson in advance. The teachers of course should observe this rule. Without such previous preparation on the part of both teachers and scholars the time and labor spent in the school are measurably lost. All the parties and interests involved must suffer the evil consequences to a greater or less extent.

There are available and numerous helps to all Sunday-school teachers and scholars. Some of these are very valuable, and may be used to great advantage. But teachers should not too rigidly adhere to these helps. To some extent the teacher should be independent in his thoughts and methods of teaching. It is a good practice to cross-question the pupils to know whether or not they understand the lesson, and to more firmly fix the truth in the mind. In the recapitulation of the lesson, in the class and before the whole school, this method of instruction may be used to good effect. A mere routine and perfunctory performance should be avoided. Teachers who have the work at heart, and the presence and help of the Spirit, will rise to a higher plane of usefulness. Sunday-school work should be made as thorough as possible; a mere surface teaching amounts to but little. A sacred calling like this is not the place for a bungler. In a word, our schools should be officered and taught,

as a rule, by men and women of age and experience. They should be honorable and of good report, noted for their intelligence, learning, and piety. And only such as will command the confidence and respect of both the Church and community.

The relation of the infant and other classes of small children to the school is one of delicacy, involving more than ordinary interests. It is well to have separate classes, with an infant department. This is convenient, if not a necessity; but there is danger of being too rigid and circumscribed in this direction. The school is one, and its unity must not be broken. In forming classes or other work in the organization and government of the school these facts must be kept in view. In the opening and closing of the school, in the service of song, and in every other possible way, let the younger children be brought in direct contact and sympathy with the whole school, and made to feel that they are a part of it, and not simply a class to themselves. Give them to understand that they are one with the older and more advanced scholars in the rights, privileges, and benefits of the school. A general review of the lesson at the close of the school, properly conducted, may be alike profitable to young and old. In this way each may receive a portion suited to his and her age, capacity, and

necessities. The whole school should eat at the same table, and the food should be of such character and in such quantity and variety as to meet the wants of all. This community of association, instruction, and fellowship can hardly be stressed too much. It binds the different departments and classes of the school together, and this bond of union goes with them into other relations, duties, and labors in Church-work. This, as much as any other one thing, will tend to secure the attendance of the children on the public preaching of the gospel. This is greatly to be desired, and any thing looking to this end should be encouraged. The Sunday-school and pulpit have interests in common, and should work together in the unity of the Spirit.

CHAPTER V.

The Living Ministry.

THE gospel, as preached by the representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ, is pre-eminently above and superior to all other instrumentalities in the awakening, instruction, and salvation of men. It is of divine appointment; God calls and sends men to this one work. Their only business is to save souls. In the nature of the case they can have no other employment. The magnitude and importance of the work require their whole time, talents, and opportunities. They are in the stead of God to the people. On this subject Paul says of himself and the other apostles: "God . . . hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

The word of life, as dispensed by them, is the same gospel that Jesus himself would preach were he present in person to occupy the pulpit. In the light of these facts the gospel has great magnitude, authority, and power. It commands the attention and obedience of all men, Jew and Gentile alike.

To neglect or slight the gospel is to dishonor its Author and destroy our own peace and happiness. To persist in such a course would be to destroy both soul and body forever. This is affirmed of all, of every age and condition in life, who reject the gospel. And this is the only reason why any soul of man is ever lost.

Children, as well as adults, need the benefits of the gospel, and have a right to them. Hence the children who are deprived of the gospel suffer wrongfully, and sustain great and irreparable loss.

More than this, the rights and benefits of the gospel belong to the children in a pre-eminent sense. They are charter members in "the kingdom of God," and must not be shut out. The recognition of their membership in the Church of God by baptism is based in part on this fact. There are many other reasons for baptizing children, but this will at least serve to show that infant baptism is not an unmeaning ceremony, as some have supposed. But it is not our purpose to argue this question here; we simply say in passing, let the children be baptized in every place.

It is well, I may say a duty, that our children attend the Sunday-school service; but it is far more important that they should hear the gospel by the mouth of the living ministry. The gospel from the pulpit is with authority, "and in demonstration of

the Spirit and of power." Let all the children of the Church attend with their parents. And let irreligious parents and their children be persuaded to hear and obey the gospel. There is no reason why our children may not have the benefits of both the Sunday-school and the ministry. But if for any cause, in a given place, they cannot have both, then let the Sunday-school go, and hold on to the pulpit. I should not hesitate for a moment to make this choice for my children, and I believe that God would approve and bless the action as wise and good. It is certainly the part of wisdom to accept and take the greater good, and as between the Sunday-school and the gospel by the living preacher there is no comparison. The two can never be made equal, much less should the Sunday-school have the preference over the ministry even for children. If we are to have the one and not the other, then give to me, and give to my children after me, in all the generations to come, the gospel as taught of God by his appointed ministry. There is no substitute for the preached gospel by men ordained and sent of God, and nothing should be allowed to supplant it. The gospel is the great power of God in morals and religion, and the youngest and oldest alike need its benefits. Many good people are in error at this point, supposing the Sunday-school adequate to meet all the wants of the children. This ac-

counts largely for the absence of the children from the preaching service. This neglect of the house of God has settled into a habit with many children, which has become alarming in many localities. Unless the evil is cured the Church will sustain great loss. Any delusion or pretext that keeps the children away from church is an evil, not excepting the Sunday-school. But this is the abuse, and not the legitimate effects, of the Sunday-school; and it comes about in the way I have suggested, and from other erroneous ideas entertained and practiced along this line. Many of our schools, and especially those in the towns and cities, close just before the public services begin, and the children are not expected to remain. Their part of the service of God has ended, and they are dismissed and sent away as having no interest in the preaching. This service is for the old folks, and not for the children. At least this is the impression made on the minds of the children. Thus dismissed, they go home, or may be into the streets, the parents in many instances know not where; and some of them, although professed Christians, occupying prominent places in the Church, seem not to care. Those who are solicitous and watchful appear often to have but little control over their children, who, in consequence, do about as they please.

It is held by some that it is too confining to keep

the children in to hear the sermon; and more than this, that the children must be allowed some recreations and liberties on the Sabbath. This is the misguided reasoning of some parents, the Church too often concurring. This evil is sometimes encouraged by the preachers. Such an indorsement on their part establishes the wrong almost beyond remedy. Most preachers, however, take the correct view of this subject, and do what they can to have the children hear the gospel.

Children go to the day-school, and stay two or three times as long as at the Sunday-school, and nothing is thought of it. True, they get tired, grow weary, returning home faint and half sick at times. All this is expected, the cost has been counted in advance; and so the next day they go again, and keep on going to the end of the term. This is secular education, and the interests involved are of sufficient importance to justify the course we have suggested as the common practice. This is all right, and has our hearty indorsement. But are the Sunday-school interests and work of less importance, and to be made less laborious to our children? Is a secular education worth more than a knowledge of the Bible? Is this great text-book in morals and religion, which is infallible in its teaching, to be made second in importance to the books used in our common and public schools? Are

worldly endowments to be preferred to a Christian and religious culture? It would seem so, judging from the teachings and practice of many of the present time. Actions speak louder than words; and, judging from this voice and testimony, with the masses a religious education is of secondary importance. Let us away with all such false and contradictory reasoning, and throw the doors wide open that our children may come in and have the benefits of the living ministry as well as those of the Sunday-school.

But it is objected that the children are not capable of pulpit instruction; that its teachings are above their capacity of comprehension. This cannot be true, for the same shepherd who feeds the sheep is required also to feed the lambs. There is in the gospel "the sincere milk of the word" for the children, as truly as there is "strong meat for them who are able to bear it." The gospel is one alike suited to old and young. The children who have their rights in the home do not eat at a separate side-table, but with their parents and other grown people. The table is supposed to be furnished with a suitable variety of food to meet the tastes and wants of all: milk and bread for the children, and the stronger diet for those who are older and need it. In like manner let the old folks and children eat together in the sanctuary of God. Surely the

stated gospel repasts, served by God's appointed ministry, have sufficient variety to meet the wants of all ages and classes. The children need the privileges and benefits of the gospel as really as do their parents. Let neither class be deprived of them. All the children should attend the regular Church service in every place. And let the special and extraordinary means and agencies of the gospel be put within their reach. Any child capable of being taught in the Sunday-school may take lessons from the pulpit, with at least a measure of profit to God's glory in the prospective good of the Church. Therefore take all and always your little ones with you to the house of God. This will please your heavenly Father, and be a delight to the holy angels, supposing them to be cognizant of the affairs of men on earth. Yea, and thine own soul also, will be made to joy in God and to rejoice forever. This is the way of God's appointment to us and to our children, leading us and them to salvation, to a useful and happy life, and to a home at last in heaven.

The behavior of children at Church is a question that deserves consideration in this connection. I favor the custom of families sitting together in the same pew, and especially when the children are young. In this way the father can better assist the mother in the duty of caring for the children; keep-

ing them in place, quiet, attentive, and orderly in every respect, and to the close of the service. They must be taught church manners, and the parents are charged with this duty; and the sooner the work is begun the better. This may possibly seem a trivial matter to some persons, but it is not. The child's good behavior in the house of God in after life depends largely on its early training. And much more than this: Good behavior in the house of God is healthful and helpful to children, in morals, in religion, and in personal piety and usefulness in all after life. And if so, then the eternal destiny of individuals—to a greater or less extent—may be involved in this question, which to many seems to be of but little consequence.

The congregation standing to sing, the children should stand; kneeling to pray, teach the children to kneel. They should be as ready and as exact in conformity to the rules of social and public worship as the parents themselves. Where they are properly taught they will do so intelligently and willingly. I give this example from real life. Two little children—a son and daughter of pious parents—are visiting with their mother at a distant place, and among strangers. On the Sabbath the mother could not attend, but sent the children to church. They sat together in the same pew, and observed closely the forms of worship, standing to

sing and kneeling to pray—their behavior throughout being such as becomes the house of God. This was a matter of surprise to the congregation, and the subject of favorable criticisms at the close of the services. The children of this congregation had not been trained in this way, and hence the surprise and criticisms I have mentioned. But why not train all children in this way? It looks well, and it is well. This is the divine method as laid down in the Scriptures. “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Many parents are surprised and mortified at the misconduct of their grown sons and daughters at church. This is often not so much an intentional wrong with them as a habit growing out of the neglect of proper training. Now it seems next to impossible to learn a better way. Such neglect on the part of parents is cruel to their children, dishonoring to God and a reproach upon themselves and the Church of which they are members.

Among other things of importance, children should be taught to give their personal attention to the preacher and to what he says from the pulpit. And they may learn this lesson very early, though after much labor and painstaking on the part of the parents. They should be established in their attention to the gospel by the time they

are old enough to begin to understand and appreciate its lessons of divine wisdom and salvation. But if at this age the children have yet to learn to be attentive, it must be to the shame of their parents, and at a great loss to themselves. It is marvelous that so many parents never think of this matter, much less give any personal attention to it. They leave their children to themselves, to hear the gospel or not, at their own pleasure. They know but little about the behavior of their children at church, and seem to care less. Others, who are not willfully neglectful, are sometimes misguided as to their duties and responsibilities; and at the age when they expect and are anxious to have their children receive and obey the gospel they are found inattentive and careless, seemingly having no concern whatever about their souls. The father wonders at this, and his heart is grieved. I hear him say: "O that my children would turn to God and seek salvation!" The mother joins in the lamentations of her husband. In the deep anguish of her soul she exclaims: "O it seems so strange that our children are still in sin and in the way to death and hell. It seems so strange that they will knowingly reject Christ and remain out of the Church. I do greatly long to see them numbered among the people of God and on the way to heaven." In most of such cases the trouble lies in

the lack of proper training, and possibly the principal wrong is found in the fact that the children were not taught to be attentive to the word preached.

Another matter. In the rural districts, when the weather will permit, the children are sometimes allowed to run in and out of the church-house during the public service. They have the freedom of the yard, talking, laughing, sporting, and no attention is given to their conduct. While they are without the parents are numbered with the sincere, devout worshipers within. Strange inconsistency! Such facts are incredible—at least hard to believe by those who have never witnessed any thing of the sort. No wonder, when such children have grown to be men and women, if they shall be found wanting in respect and proper reverence for the house and worship of God. “As the twig is bent the tree’s inclined.” This old and familiar adage has a lesson in it that some parents are slow to learn. Instill moral and religious principles into the minds and hearts of children, and establish in them correct and good habits, and there will be no trouble in their after character and lives.

Several years ago the Rev. John D. Vincil, a member of the Missouri Annual Conference, gave me the following interesting incident of his ministry. He was conducting a revival meeting at the

time in Callaway County, Mo. Among the converts was a young lady of good personal manners and appearance and a liberal education. She was the pride of her parents and respected and admired in the community. She had attended Church with some degree of regularity all her life, but up to the time of this meeting she had been a listless, indifferent hearer of the gospel. She said that on going to church she would hear the voice of the preacher, not understanding what he said, and that she had no desire or expectation of being benefited by the sermon. She attended church because she was fond of society, and the drift was in that direction. This was the custom, and she was glad to conform to it. It was a pastime, a recreation, and without a serious thought of saving her soul. But on hearing Dr. Vincil for the first time, she noted the text, and followed him thoughtfully through the subject from beginning to end. She was delighted with the discourse. This she said was the first sermon she had ever heard in all her life. Under this sermon she was convicted and brought to Christ. No doubt she would have experienced religion years before this if she had given proper attention to the word preached. Great multitudes remain unsaved, from year to year, for the want of attentive consideration to what God says through his appointed ministry. But there

is another interest of great importance connected with this subject. The event of salvation is a great thing at any period of life, but the earlier in life the better. Take the case of the young lady I have mentioned. The time and the joy of her salvation were delayed for years, although she was converted comparatively young. Who can estimate the loss of those years to her, the Church, the cause of God, of humanity, and of posterity? She has lost opportunities to do good, possibly to save souls, which she can never regain. The delay of salvation to a human soul is no small or trivial matter.

RE-PREACHING THE SERMON.

It is not enough that the children should attend church and hear the sermon, but the parents should re-preach it to them on returning home. This is best done in most cases by catechetical instructions. The best time, perhaps, is an hour in the afternoon on Sunday, but any time during the week will do. I suggest the following as indicating the character and manner of the service. The family all present, with some of the grandchildren, the father says: "Samuel, tell us, my son, the text the preacher used as the foundation of his discourse. I desire to know the book, chapter, and verse. Where is this text found; in the Old or New Testament? Leora, my daughter, you may answer. Master

Buell will please tell us how the text reads. Give us the exact wording if you can; but if not, give us the sense of the passage in your own words. In what connection are these words found, and by whom and under what circumstances were they spoken? Let all give attention while Zora gives us the answer. Ollie May will now state the subject of the text, and give the principal or leading thoughts as presented by the preacher. Well done! And now let Ethel tell what the preacher said under these several divisions of his subject. What were his statements, arguments, and illustrations? Tell us just what you remember of these things. And now Lizzie will give us the concluding part of the sermon, recapitulating the principal points in the arrangement and discussion of the subject."

If the children cannot answer these and like questions, it is supposed that the parents can. In this way the sermon is re-preached in the home. This is to the glory of God in the great good of both parents and children. This is one of the very best means of securing attention to pulpit instructions. If for no other reason, the children, knowing that they are to be catechised, will give the more earnest attention to the things they hear. They will soon learn to be critical auditors as well as attentive hearers. The parents also will be the more

careful on their part that they may be better prepared to teach their children in the way we have suggested. This sort of work is included in what Paul says: "Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain." I know from experience that this method of catechising children is of great practical utility. This was my father's custom. Others "walk by the same rule and mind the same things," but when compared with the whole number of religious households they are few and far between. The largest benefits of the gospel can never be attained in the neglect or violation of this custom. It would be a grand thing for the Church of God and for our common humanity if this practice was universally observed. The actual existence of such a state of things would extend the gospel with great power and rapidity into the regions beyond; and in this event the angels would hold a jubilee in heaven. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." And this joy is increased in the ratio of the number of those who are saved.

The gospel in the sanctuary, in the home, and in the hearts and lives of parents and children, is certainly a most desirable as it is a most joyous and gratifying state of things. The patriarch in the family is not less honorable than the minister

in the pulpit; nor has he a less important work to perform, although in some sense it is not as great in its magnitude and results. The patriarch is God's appointed minister in the home. He should be a co-worker with the living ministry.

CHAPTER VI.

The Pressing Inquiry.

I HAVE called attention to the great evil of parents living in sin, and consequently neglecting the moral and religious training of their children. I have also sought out and brought to notice the proper remedy. This I have done with specific exactness, giving in detail the methods, ways, and means of escape. I have told plainly, but affectionately, when, how, and what to do, that no harm, but good, may come to both parents and children, here and hereafter. I have kept to the point, have stuck close to the text—"The Great Evil and Its Remedy." God alone knows how anxious I am that the remedy may be accepted and the evil cured. This remedy, as we have shown, is "not of man, neither by man," but is of the wisdom, grace, and power of God. He only can save men from sin and lead them into a better life. The plan or method of salvation is clearly revealed in the written word of God, "which is the only rule and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice." It remains now only to ask, and to press the inquiry home to every parent: What will you do? There is a moral fam-

ine in the land, and thousands are perishing annually in their sins. This destitution, as we have shown, exists to a greater or less extent throughout all Christendom, as well as in the pagan nations of the earth. In the face of these facts, what ought to be done? What can be done to relieve the starving of our race? Reader, what will you do? You see the peril; will you help to save these perishing souls? or will you stand quietly by and see the rising generation go into the bondage of sin and death, and down into the pit of eternal night, without an effort to prevent it? Shall the infant and the little child find no security in their own parents? Shall they be led captive by Satan at his will, the parents, as sentinels, asleep at their posts? Shall our children in Christian lands be idolaters, worshiping at the shrine of fashion, of wealth, of honor, and of human glory? Shall they go after and worship the gods of the heathen, and not the living and true God? And shall the fearful and destructive consequences of idolatry be their inheritance and the portion of their cup forever? I put these questions by way of recapitulation and application of our subject. I appeal with the greatest possible earnestness to all parents, whether religious or irreligious; we urge them to consider well their duty. Parents, if they will, may save their children from sin and death and hell. They may at least clear

their own skirts of their children's blood. They are appointed of God to this work. Would God select agents inadequate to his purposes, requiring impossibilities of them? It is the gracious privilege and duty of all parents to go to heaven and to take their children with them. If any of the children should obstinately refuse to go along, the condemnation is theirs, and not with their faithful parents. This is the plain and simple record of God's word, the teaching of the gospel from the beginning. Abraham, Joshua, and others in the Old Testament times understood this, as the record shows. And they have left to all parents coming after them an example worthy of imitation. Their fidelity to God and to their separate households was such as to greatly encourage others, inspiring them with confidence and hope of success. This is one of the many reasons showing the importance of a knowledge of the scriptures of the Old as well as of the New Testament. God said of Abraham: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Joshua, in addressing the tribes at Shechem, said: "Fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the

flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Abraham and his children and Joshua and his household were one in the service of God. They worshiped at the same altar and journeyed in the same narrow way to heaven. This is in striking contrast with many Christian parents of this day, who are apparently content to serve God alone, while their children are in the service of the wicked one. The parents are traveling onward and upward in the direction of "life eternal," but the children are going downward "into everlasting punishment." This is a contradiction to the love and mercy of God in Jesus Christ, to reason, and the fitness of things. But that it is true cannot be denied. An unbroken household in the service of God in this life is the way to secure an unbroken family in heaven. This is God's method "in bringing many sons unto glory." The people of God in the Old Testament times are numbered by families. We find also the same happy state of things in the New Testament dispensation. The children, as of old, are brought into the Church with their parents. There is a common interest

and bond of Christian union between them. This is gracious in God, and most gratifying to his creatures. It is both divine and human that it should be this way. God has joined together in his service parents and their children, and let no creed or Church or other human authority put them asunder. The natural affinities which bind them together are soon to be broken in death, but the spiritual ties shall never be dissolved. But to the record of the New Testament on this subject. Instance the house of Chloe, and also of Stephanas; Lydia and her household; the jailer at Philippi, and all his—"all his children," for so the original has it. We read also of "the unfeigned faith" that was in Timothy, "which dwelt first in his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice." This shows the utility, the great power for good there is in household religion. In morals and religion this is now, as it ever has been in the past, a great *desideratum*. What is most needed in the Church of to-day is piety in parents, with good works, which shall influence their children's children to the third and fourth generations—nay, more than this, a holy character and godly life in parents, reproduced in the generations to come without limit. Unbelief may suggest that this is an impossibility; but faith says this is the work of God, and that it can, it must, it shall be done. In this work the parents

are the first and most responsible agents; then the Church and ministry come in as helpers, co-workers in perpetuating the knowledge, love, and salvation of God amongst men in the earth. Let these parties, so vitally interested, keep wide-awake to their duties and responsibilities. Let all the facts involved be carefully studied and understood. Such knowledge will surely quicken them to a greater diligence, activity, and efficiency in the Master's service. Let every Christian philosopher and philanthropist and every good man and woman, however humble and obscure their station in life may be, come to the rescue. Here are the dear children, hundreds of thousands in number, scattered throughout the world, who are to be saved of God through human instrumentalities, or lost forever. They must be taught that there is a God, one living and true God, their God and Saviour; and that they should love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind, and with all their strength, and their neighbor as themselves. This is the will of God in a nutshell, the sum of Christian theology and of Biblical knowledge, and the perfection of Christian experience and happiness. This is the fulfillment of all righteousness and true holiness—the whole duty of man. The standard is high, but those *who will* may attain unto it by the help of God.

Reader, I still press the inquiry: What will you do? And it is well to take into the account not only the consequences of sin in this life, but also in the life which is to come. Sin pollutes, defiles, and degrades the moral nature; perverts the affections, dishonors the body, and kills the soul. It destroys both soul and body in hell. The man who lives and dies under the guilt, power, dominion, and consequences of sin is a failure; he is ruined forever; "good were it for that man if he had never been born." Alas! it is to be feared that there are many such, whose feet take hold on death and hell. All such, living without God, shall die without hope. Many of them pass through the gate of death in great agony of mind and grief of soul, and as they step one by one into the swelling, turbid waters of the Jordan I hear them curse the day of their birth and the God of their being. One says, just as he steps into the chilly waters: "Myself am hell." Another, as he closes his eyes in death, exclaims: "I am taking a leap into the dark." Others, like these, die in great agony and remorse of conscience. Alas for a soul without God and without hope! The Psalmist says: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Again, he says: "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their

cup." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." This last quotation is the decision of the Judge at the last day. And this is what St. Paul has to say on the subject: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them who know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." And shall my children be numbered with these wicked individuals and nations who shall be turned into hell? Are they doomed to be overtaken by a horrible tempest of snares, fire, and brimstone, with no hope of escape? And shall they go away into everlasting punishment, to endure the pains and agonies of the second death—the death that never dies? Must this be the portion of their cup forever? And is this dreadful loss of the soul because they knew not God, and did not obey the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? And am I as a parent at fault? Have I neglected my duty? The door of heaven is now and forever closed against my children, and they are cast into outer darkness, where "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Is the cause of their damnation in me? O what parent can bear such a thought as this, much less endure the calam-

ity in the eternal loss of the souls of their children? O ye parents, look upon that lovely, charming daughter, and upon that sprightly, promising son, and, as you prize their souls and your own, hasten to lead them to Christ and to a home in heaven.

I am persuaded that only those who have witnessed the terrible remorse of the ungodly, and have heard their wailings of despair in the dying hour can have any just conceptions of the sufferings and agonies which they endure. It is nothing more nor less than the torments of hell, begun and realized on earth; it is a foretaste of the pain, sorrow, anguish, and sufferings of the pit of eternal death, that which must be endured forever. It is not necessary that wicked men should die to know from experience what the rich man suffered when he cried and said: "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." The flame is kindled in the torments of a guilty conscience in this life. If there are no torments in the soul here, there can be no hell to the soul hereafter. It is not the place so much as the condition of the soul that gives joy or grief, that gives ease or pain, that creates its heaven or its hell. There is something, it is true, in the place we call hell which is undesirable and forbidding; it is the place "prepared for the devil and his an-

gels." How terrible it must be! awful beyond description! a place that fills the soul with fear and dread. It is the place of "outer darkness" and of "everlasting punishment;" it is the place of "perdition," of future misery and "eternal death." But even such a place as this, so tormenting to a lost soul, would be tolerable to the saint of God. Were it possible for a redeemed soul, "washed" and made "white in the blood of the Lamb," to go down to hell, there would come to it no manner of hurt. The place could not destroy its happiness in God. The case of the three Hebrew children who were cast into the burning fiery furnace is illustrative of this subject. With the Son of God walking with them in the midst of the fire, it took no effect upon them. And so the fires of perdition could have no effect on a pure spirit, a soul "washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Personal salvation by faith in the Son of God forever quenches the devouring flames of hell. It is only sin that can kill beyond the tomb. Ah! it is sin that does the mischief. Where there is no sin there is no death, no hell, no suffering. Every sinner determines his own destiny. "Woe unto the wicked! *it shall be ill with him*: for the reward of his hands shall be given him." "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” This means a soul lost forever! Lost, lost, lost! No human tongue can tell nor angel pen describe the sufferings of a lost soul. Great multitudes, in the error of their ways, choose death rather than life. Some even seem greedy of their own destruction. They hasten to ruin, and take their children with them.

Reader, I am glad that there is an opposite picture to this, and we will look on that before we part. It is a lovely picture—bright, beautiful, charming. I never look upon it but in admiration and delight. It is a picture that the angels are interested in, and as they gaze upon it they give glory to God. It is the scene of a household, united in the fear and service of God. There is no purer or better type of heaven than a religious household, as once before stated. I hear a father say: “I am resolved to educate and train my children for God and heaven. If my personal piety toward God and fidelity to my children can be used of God in their salvation, then shall they not be lost.” And the good man is doubly assured of success in this most desirable and delightful work by the hearty co-operation of the mother. She joins her piety, tears, prayers, songs, and all her sympathy, strength, and powers with the noblest and best efforts of her husband. They realize that they are one in the desire and effort to save their children. But the work is

one of great delicacy and difficulty, as it is one of great magnitude. And it is increasingly so as the children grow older and their wants become more numerous and complicated. But they are only the more watchful, prayerful, and diligent in the use of all the means of grace. They lean by faith on the strong arm of God, and plead for help in the name of Christ. Nor do they plead in vain. They are strengthened and emboldened in their faith by the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel, and the intercessions of Christ, which never fail. The divine presence, direction, and blessing are given in answer to their prayerful efforts and their fervent, importunate pleadings with God. This faith, with its corresponding works, soon bears fruit in their children. The fruit is made manifest in their early conversion to God and membership in the Church of Christ. And afterward, in their holy lives, the fruit becomes more luscious and abundant. Such children enjoy the esteem and confidence of all who know them, and, above all, they are beloved and honored of God. Such parents and children constitute a household of faith and of good works, having the protection and blessing of God upon it, and the light of his countenance shining in the midst of them. As a family and as individuals they are happy and useful. As good citizens they are honored and beloved by all, and

as Christians they are the most worthy and the brightest lights in the Church of God. Therefore, beloved Christian parents, "be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

But there comes a day of solicitude and of great anxiety to this religious family which I have so truthfully and yet so imperfectly represented. The eldest son is sick nigh unto death. The family and the consulting physicians do all they can, but the dear child grows worse. Medical science and skill are exhausted, and the patient must die. The parents are almost heart-broken, but can bring no relief to the dying child. He has come to the margin of the river, and is ready to cross over. Loving hearts and willing hands can do nothing more. His only help now is in God. The sad duty devolves upon the father to reveal to his noble, manly son the fact that the time of his departure is at hand. With a choked utterance and a trembling voice he says: "William, my son, the physicians tell me that the last hope is gone, and that you must die." The young man is neither startled nor affrighted, but remains calm, peaceful, and self-possessed. You hear no shriek of despair, of wailing, or of lamentation, as in the case of the dying sinner. His faith abides in God, and he is unmoved by fear. In the

fact of an indwelling Christ and the conscious hope of glory he stands secure, having the victory over death, hell, and the grave. Turning to his aged father, I hear him say: "Father, I thank you for bringing me up 'in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' Much of what I am I owe to you, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. Yes, to you, to your love and authority, to your Christian character and life, I am consciously and largely indebted for present salvation and for the hope of heaven. I go across the river just a little in advance of you. Soon we shall meet in our Father's house above. Good-by, father, until we meet on 'the other and the bright shore.'" Close by stands the loving, ever-watchful mother, her eyes all suffused with tears. Looking up into her anxious face, the youth exclaims: "O my precious mother! I can never forget your love and tenderness to me. Thank God, dear mother, for your love. In power and sweetness and in holy joy it stands next to the infinite love and mercy of God. To me it is a well of life, even in the dying hour. Among my first recollections of you, precious mother, are those connected with closet religion, with the fear and worship of the only living and true God. It was you who first taught me to love God and to keep his holy commandments, and that Jesus Christ died to save sinners, and that I should put my trust in him

as my personal Saviour. It was you who taught me to say: 'Our Father who art in heaven.' From you I learned to lisp in prayer and in song the name of Jesus. Your labor in the Lord has not been in vain. God has heard and answered your prayers and bottled up your tears. Death comes and separates us, but the separation shall not be forever. It is the Master who calleth me, and I must go. The promised land of Canaan lying just beyond the Jordan is full in view, and the angels are beckoning me to come. Do not weep for me, mother, but meet me in heaven." The mother embraces her dying child, baptizing him with her tears, and says: "Yes, my son, your mother will meet you in heaven." And now he calls for his brothers and sisters, and gives to them his parting blessing, kissing them each an affectionate adieu until they meet where parting shall be no more. All the relatives, friends, and neighbors present receive from the dying young man his benedictions of love. He gives to each one, according to his or her condition and necessities, words of comfort, of advice, of warning, and of good cheer. "And now," he says, "as I am called to die:

"O sing to me of heaven,
Sing songs of holy ecstasy,
To waft my soul on high."

And while they sing his disembodied spirit,

plumed for its flight and accompanied by a convoy of angels, soars up to glory and to God,

Sweeping through the gates of the new Jerusalem,
Washed in the blood of the Lamb.

And thus, one after another, parents and children cross over the Jordan and are gathered to their homes with the redeemed and blood-washed in heaven. An unbroken family in heaven! Father, mother, and all the children—delightful thought! O joyous anticipation! Yes, there will be, beyond any doubt, hundreds and thousands of unbroken families in heaven. I believe that my father's family will be among the happy number. My parents, two infant brothers, and three sisters, each of whom died in the faith, I doubt not, are already there. Two sisters still living are on the way, and they shall conquer through the blood of the Lamb the last enemy. I anticipate for them an abundant admission into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They have, in common with all Christians, "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear," then shall they also, I doubt not, appear with him in glory. And I can say with the Apostle Paul: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those

things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." I am "ready, waiting, watching for the coming of the Bridegroom." "Hallelujah! praise ye the Lord!" "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

And when at last you reach yon coast,
O'er life's rough ocean driven,
May you rejoice no wanderer lost,
A family saved in heaven!

PART THIRD.

MISCELLANEOUS.

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!” (John i. 29.)

“As by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.” (Rom. v. 18.)

(127)

CHAPTER I.

The Possibilities to Children.

THE children of Christian parents have rights and possibilities which are truly wonderful. From their birth they are citizens of the kingdom of God. They are not "strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Christ says: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." Again the Master declares that little children are the "greatest in the kingdom of heaven," and in the same connection: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Little children are charter members in the Church of God, the model to all others, and the greatest in the kingdom. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in nowise enter therein." Note the fact that little children are the pattern to adult believers. All this is most wonderful and gracious, and shows the wisdom and goodness of God to our fallen race.

This is neither a denial nor a contradiction of the doctrine of depravity. All children born into the

world have a corrupt nature, and need to be regenerated and born of God. By nature they are "inclined to evil, and that continually." In a lost condition, the Son of God has died to redeem and save them. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" This is the hope of our children. They need the atonement of Christ, and are saved through his shed blood. How? when? Not being personal sinners, but only corrupt in their nature, they are passive in the benefits of the atonement. They are saved in virtue of what Christ has done for them. Salvation is the work of a moment, the work of God; and the moment they need salvation that moment they receive it.

When a child is born into the world its defiled body is washed and clothed in the clean, white linen, prepared in advance; and as we look upon the babe we say, "What an innocent, sweet child!" and so it is. This symbolizes the moral defilement of the child and "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" in its personal salvation. It is clothed in white raiment, "washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." This is the work of the Spirit and grace of God, and certainly never comes later than the outward washing. Why should the body of an infant child be cleansed, and the impurities of its spiritual nature not be

purged away? Who will answer? To suppose any delay in the work of moral cleansing would be dishonoring to God, and contrary to the teachings of the Bible, to reason, and the fitness of things. This would make God less wise and good than man, who washes his child and makes it clean, while God leaves the soul of the helpless infant in its moral pollution and uncleanness.

Children receive the benefits of the atonement in personal salvation at the time of their birth, and not, as some have supposed, on the event of their death. It is as necessary and as much to God's glory that a child should be morally pure as an adult person; and God has provided for their cleansing, and they are clean. This is evidenced in the fact that adult believers must come into the moral state of little children in order to be saved. They are the model.

If children are citizens of the kingdom of God, if they constitute a part of the family of God, and are consequently "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ," the fact ought to be known and acknowledged. Infant baptism is an acknowledgment of this fact. To this end and for this purpose was the sacrament of baptism ordained. By this divinely-appointed method God speaks to the world in recognition of little children as members of his household. This is the mark

which God puts alike upon infants and adults, by which they are known as his "peculiar people." The devil has no right of property in those who are sealed as "the servants of God in their foreheads." This answers in part at least the question: "What good does it do to baptize an unconscious babe?" It is putting God's seal of recognition and approval upon "these little ones who believe in Christ," and who are saved through his atoning blood. Infant children are said to believe in Christ, because they are in the same moral state with adult believers. This entitles them to the right of baptism, to all its privileges and benefits. The family of God, on earth and in heaven, is composed largely of infants and little children. They belong to God's covenanted people, and baptism is the sign and seal of that covenant. The world is no place for children; their place is in the Church of God. Children should not serve the devil and sin, going in the ways of unrighteousness; no, not for a day or hour. They should be the servants, as they are the children of God, loving him with all the heart, and walking in the way of his commandments all their days.

But is this possible? Can a child saved by "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" cross the line of accountability and continue to the end of life in this saved state? In other

words, is it possible not to forfeit our infantile justification? May a child begin, continue, and end his earthly life in the Church and service of God, so that Satan shall have no part or lot in him, so that he may truthfully say in old age: "I have loved and served God all my days?" The Bible and the gospel answer these questions in the affirmative. Reason joins her testimony with theirs, and the fact is established without further witness. Others, if necessary, could be produced. There are at least a few examples on record to confirm and establish us in this faith.

Take this instance: A child is born of religious parents, is dedicated to God by baptism in infancy, and afterward trained up in the way he should go—brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. With persistency the mother cares for her child as one who must give account to God, daily praying with him in the closet, and instructing him in the science of morality and religion. Twice every day—morning and evening—he is found with his parents worshipping God at the family altar. Here, from time to time, he is more perfectly instructed in the things of God, and more fully consecrated to his service. He invariably goes with his parents to preaching and to the Sunday-school. He evidently loves the house and the worship of God. It is soon apparent that the

gospel is to him the most precious and beneficial of all the means of grace. He is in his pew to hear the sermon, and to remember and profit by it. He is honest, truthful, and obedient to his parents. It is his delight "to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God." The Bible is his principal book—never reading novels and trashy literature. From a child to old age he was never on any account either in a drinking or dancing saloon, never played a game of cards, and, except marbles when a boy, no other game of chance; with one exception each, was never in a theater or circus. These exceptions he regrets as blunders in his life. He never used tobacco in any form, nor whisky or other intoxicants as a beverage. In his fourteenth year he made a public profession of religion, ratifying the vows of baptism which had been upon him from an infant. He claims, however, that he did as truly love and serve God before this event as he ever did afterward. These facts are recorded here to show the grand possibilities to children of Christian parents when properly trained. What the parents did for this child other parents may do for their children.

This I know is impossible to an unbeliever; but faith in God and a diligent use of the means of grace will accomplish the work. The devil will

teach you a different doctrine. Believe him not, "because there is no truth in him." He is a liar and the father of lies. Be not ignorant of his devices, for he would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect.

I am glad to be able to say in this connection that the devil never had my affections, money, time, talents, or opportunities. These, with my whole being and possessions, are now and ever have been the Lord's. I have no recollection of the time that I did not love and serve God. Never for a single day did I of set purpose and wickedly turn away from his holy commandments to serve the devil. If this be boasting, it is only to magnify the wisdom and grace of God, and to show what pious parents may accomplish by the help of God. I owe all to my parents. But the reader asks: "How about your own children? Have you succeeded in bringing them up for God and heaven?" Reader, what is that to you? Any failure of mine along this line could not change the truth of God into a lie. But I will answer your question by asking another. "What do you think of Ethel, my youngest grandchild, now four years old?" A few days ago, when she and I were in the sitting-room alone, she climbed on my knee and said: "Grandpa, who do you think I love best?" Thinking that she had reference to her grandma and myself, I answered:

“O you love grandpa best, do you not?” She threw her little arms around my neck, and putting her mouth close to my ear said: “No, grandpa; I love God best.” And I can safely record as much for each one of my grandchildren. And why should not a child love God best? We do know that many of them do, and many more would with the proper training.

The grandfather of Rev. Sam P. Jones has a family of forty-two children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Half the number, it is believed, are in heaven; the other half are on the way. Some of them lived for a time in sin, but they are all now in the service of God, striving to enter into eternal life. This is a good showing for the Christian religion. Such a record ought to encourage even the faint-hearted to an active faith and obedience in doing the commandments of God. I am persuaded that there is a larger number of such families than is generally believed. But they ought to be, and are being, largely multiplied.

CHAPTER II.

Obedience in Children.

OBEEDIENCE in children to parental authority is commanded of God. This is the first and principal thing in family government. It is reasonable and right, just and good. What God demands is always best.

The authority of parents, however, can only express the will of God; they dare not go beyond the divine will in any thing. They are in the stead of God to their children. The father is pre-eminently the prophet, priest, and king of his household. The authority is not an iron rule, brute force government, but that of a kind, tender-hearted, and affectionate father, ruling in wisdom and righteousness—a father ready, if need be, to die for his children. And so the obedience is not a forced obedience, or submission to an arbitrary power, but a ready, cheerful, active, loving obedience to a wise ruler, and one that is just and good. Loyalty to a government such as this is in the interests alike of parents and children. Only on this basis rests, or can rest, permanent peace and prosperity to the household. To the children there are duties, re-

straints, and servitude, but no complaint or dissatisfaction. Loyalty in children to parental authority is the essence and highest expression of morality of which they are capable, and the first budding in them of a Christian character and life. The opposite of all this is true of disobedience. It is treason against God and man. And parents who allow disobedience are more guilty than their rebellious children. This may seem a hard saying in the face of the fact that many children will do as they please in spite of their parents—even in defiance at times of their authority. In this case the obedience in the children is lost by neglect of duty on the part of parents; or, possibly for the same reason, was never secured. Successful parental authority and good family government are not hidden mysteries, but an open secret, which may be read and known of all men. The will of the parent must be expressed and obeyed from infancy, through childhood and youth, up to manhood and womanhood. If infancy is allowed to have its own way, childhood and youth will be hard to conquer. If childhood and youth are not conquered, young manhood and womanhood will do as they please. In this way disobedience is established, and God's order in the family reversed. All are agreed that it is right for children to obey their parents, but many hold that the infant is not capable of obedi-

ence. This is a fatal mistake and the source of the greatest mischief in after life. All manner of evil and wrong-doing flow from this fountain, until the swelling stream becomes deep and wide in its violence, and destructive of all that is sacred and good in the home circle. The will of the infant child is made manifest from its birth, and from the beginning must be kept in subjection to parental authority. The child Jesus was subject to his parents, and has left an example to all other children. This is not only a worthy example to our children, but it is absolutely necessary that they should follow it. The holy precepts of the gospel and the holy example of Jesus upon this subject leave all without excuse.

By crying or otherwise the youngest child can make its wants known, and if they are reasonable they should be granted, but if wrong denied. To do a thing which is wrong simply to please the child and hush its crying is a common weakness to many mothers, and the sin of some fathers. This is sowing to the flesh, and they that thus sow to the flesh "shall of the flesh reap corruption." All such parents in after years are surprised, grieved, and mortified in the disobedience and sinful conduct of their children; but the harvest is from the seed of their own sowing. Obedience in children is the way to life, peace, and happiness; but diso-

bedience brings wretchedness, misery, and death. Children who are obedient to their parents will submit to any rightfully-constituted authority, whether it be divine or human. They are loyal alike to God and man. But the self-willed child in the home is a disloyal subject to civil government and a rebel against all moral restraints and divine authority. Put no restraints on infancy, and let childhood and youth have their own way, and you will soon have a country full of bad citizens, and the Church overrun with unworthy and unruly members. So, likewise, in these facts parents and others may find the reason why the word of God and the gospel so often seemingly fail in their mission of saving souls. It is easy to win souls to Christ where child-obedience dominates the heart and life. This is, indeed, in itself a service to God, and a recognized obedience to the gospel. Parents themselves must be loyal to God if they would have obedience in their children. The great work and chief delight of the devil is to secure disobedience to God, both in parents and in their children. We must stand between our children and his Satanic majesty by instilling into their minds and hearts the principles and practice of obedience, duty, and servitude. The safety of all children is in serving with fidelity their parents, as the word of God directs. "Children, obey your

parents in the Lord: for this right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

The failure of children in these things is most generally chargeable to their parents. Both the divine and civil government hold parents responsible for the conduct of their children. It is their special and sacred work to mold the character and shape the lives and destiny of their offspring. They are the proper and divinely-appointed agents in supplying their physical, intellectual, and moral wants—directing them in the way of happiness in this life and to glory and a blessed immortality in the life which is to come. Thus far all are agreed, and we have no controversy.

But as to the nature and extent of this responsibility men differ, and differ widely. On this subject I have strong convictions, a large faith, and a comfortable experience. I am responsible for my children in the sense and to the degree that if they do wrong I take the blame, and if they do right I claim the credit. I speak of minors subject to the will of the parents. Properly trained in childhood and youth, they are secure in after life. A child trained in the way he should go, when he is old will not depart from it. Take this illustration: Say I have a son who becomes a drunkard, either before

or after he reaches his majority. In that fact is found the evidence that the boy has not been trained in the way he should go. I am charged with that training, and am the guilty party. This is the Bible standard of responsibility to all parents. I admit that with many parents this is an impossibility, but only because they are not what they ought to be. Non-professors, mere nominal Christians, and hypocrites in the Church fail, of course, in meeting parental obligations. But they are doubly guilty because they have not qualified and put themselves in the condition to do the work that God requires of them. Parents truly and consistently pious, and who intelligently and scripturally bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord need have no fears. I thank God for such parents and such training. If all the children in this country of my age and under had been trained as I was, the national disgrace of drunkenness had not been known in these United States. And we might predicate the same of many other individual and national sins that disgrace us to-day. What was possible to my parents was possible to all other parents of their day and since, except for the reason above given, involving them in the neglect of personal and relative duties. And because of this neglect their children have been sinners instead of saints, as they otherwise would have been. And these sinners

have corrupted the land, so that to-day the whole country is flooded with crimes against God and man. Yes, the guilty parties are those whose moral and religious training was neglected by their ungodly or misguided parents. Criminals, wherever found, are an evidence that parents have neglected the work that God has given them to do. The root of meanness in the man is found in the disobedience of the child. And parents who fail to control their children are responsible for all the mischief that comes of their disobedience. This, however, does not relieve others of responsibility. If I neglect my boy, and others take advantage of this wrong in me to make him a drunkard, God will hold them responsible as well as myself.

These questions and interests call for the divine sympathy and solicitude. I hear the voice of God from heaven saying: "O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!" Surely this concern of God for us and our children ought to awaken in us the liveliest interests in our own souls and in the souls of our children. O how anxious and pathetic our heavenly Father is! He would lead us and ours to "glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life." O that we might all heed his loving words!

CHAPTER III.

The Sunday Lock and Key.

NEARLY fifty years ago a pious family moved from Blount County, East Tennessee, to Missouri, locating in Montgomery County, fourteen miles north-east of Danville, the county seat. The location was a desirable one, on North Bear Creek. At that time the country was new and sparsely settled. Here and there was to be found a professor of religion. The heads of a few families were Church-members, but the majority were of the world. It was a rare occurrence to hear a sermon, and especially on the Sabbath. Other public and social helps in the Christian life were irregular, few, and far between. There were a few exemplary, worthy Christians, but more or less irregularity was seen in the character and lives of many of those who were in the Church. There was a general laxity in the observance of the Christian Sabbath. The day was desecrated by hunting, fishing, sporting, visiting from house to house, talking of the weather, crops, politics, and secular and worldly matters generally.

This was a new order of things to the family I have mentioned. The customs of the new country

seemed to them incredible and all wrong. They had been accustomed to a stated ministry and to established and consistent religious habits.

The Sabbath to them was a day of rest from worldly pleasure and secular business. On this holy day they had been accustomed to go regularly to the courts of the Lord's house. With the Psalmist they could say: "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." But cut off from the holy convocations of the sanctuary, they observed the day as a Sabbath of rest in their dwelling. This to them on the Lord's-day was God's house, and must be kept sacred. They were annoyed and grieved when the neighbors would break in on their Sunday reading, meditations, prayer, and other holy duties and pleasures. This was beyond endurance, as their neighbors soon discovered. Like Daniel, true to their God, their principles, and their convictions of right, they would neither visit nor receive social visits on the Lord's-day. This surprised all the neighbors, and to some for a time it gave offense. In their fidelity and zeal for God they found opposition, as it is written: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Some went so far as to call them "Pharisees," "Puritans," "overmuch righteous;" "come not near to

us, for we are holier than thou." But in spite of all this they commanded the respect and confidence of the better class of citizens and Christians in the community. And because these parents would not allow their children to enter into the common sports and desecrations of the holy Sabbath, the report went out that they were kept under lock and key on the Lord's-day. This was not literally though it was virtually true. And let the fact be repeated and perpetuated to their memory and honor in the earth, as it doubtless is and shall forever be to their praise in heaven. Here is an example worthy of imitation by all parents. A discipline less restrictive and a piety less pronounced than this will bring trouble and sorrow to the parents and ruinous consequences to the rising generation.

Much of the wickedness and demoralization which abound in the country to-day come, directly or indirectly, from Sabbath-breaking. There is no more certain way to ruin and to death for the rising generation than a loose rein on Sunday. Judging parents by this standard, many of them seem eager, in some instances even greedy, for the destruction of their children. This Sabbath question is a leading, vital issue of the day, and the only hope is in the children. If the children are not brought up in its proper observance, the day is lost. It is next to impossible to reform a man of any evil habit or

wrong-doing who is an habitual Sabbath-breaker. The children! The children! Parents and the Church must look to the children. If others neglect their children, that is no excuse for me. I see swarms of children in open violation of the law of the Sabbath. They are full of glee and sports and merriment. They are absent from the house and worship of God, and in the midst of all manner of vice and dissipation. Week after week I see them going from bad to worse. My children would be delighted (I will suppose) to join them; but shall I let them do wrong for this reason? God forbid! If my neighbors' children, in their disobedience to God, go down to death and hell, will that make the perdition of the ungodly more tolerable to my children who have followed their example?

The question for parents to settle is not what is custom and fashionable, nor what is pleasing to our children and to others, nor yet again what sinful society and the carnal nature may demand. No, no, nothing of that sort, but what is right and what will God approve, and what is best, and what will secure the most permanent good here and eternal happiness hereafter. Reader, I am the child of those Puritan parents. Despised and persecuted as they were, I am not ashamed of them. One thing I do know: their children were only the better for "THE SUNDAY LOCK AND KEY."

CHAPTER IV.

The Apron-string of Mothers.

NOT the real string that supports the apron, keeping it in place. With this I have nothing to do. Mothers themselves must determine the length, strength, and durability of this necessary and useful instrument. It is the figurative apron-string that is in our thought, and about which we would write—the string to which all children are tied, or should be, to the good mothers of this world. This string is the symbol of the mother's love, authority, and power. She binds, and no one can unloose; she speaks, and it is the business of the child to hear and obey. Her word is the law, the rule of action to her child. The apron-string supports the child, binding him to his place. He is thus made ornamental and useful to his mother, and of good service to his generation. Such children, in childhood, in youth, and in manhood and womanhood, are the pride and crowning glory of their parents. In morality and virtue they shine as stars of the first magnitude. They shine with increasing luster in the home, in the Church, and in the community. And so likewise they excel in politeness and good

breeding, and in whatever else that is lovely, praiseworthy, and of good report. They are models in piety, honesty, sobriety, and industry, in justice, equity, and righteousness, and in all things which are true and pure and good. Their loyalty to civil government and their fidelity to God and the Church are never questioned. In the social and business circles of life they have the pre-eminence. In these and other places they are the centers of attraction and of admiration to all those who can appreciate the true and the good. Such children always live right and die well; and we believe that in the world to come the angels will delight to do them honor; and, best of all, God will recognize them as his sons and daughters, "worthy and well qualified" to live with the saints and angels forever. All this is truly predicated of the apron-string of the good mothers of earth. We include the pious father with the godly mother; they are one in responsibility, in authority, and in power; one in the work of educating and training their children. They are the salt and light of the world. God bless the good fathers and mothers of earth, for they shall "shine as the stars forever and ever." They are worthy to be crowned with a royal diadem, for "they are kings and priests unto God."

The apron-string of mothers has in it the possibilities of incalculable good. Mothers, if you get

tired, grow weary and faint at times, do not become discouraged and give up, for in due season "ye shall reap, if ye faint not." But you must have the help of God—all is vain without the divine guidance and blessing. Be careful not to overlook this fact, and pray unto God mightily and without ceasing. Watch as well as pray, and fast if need be; and be diligent and earnest in your work, and continue therein "with all perseverance and supplication," and mercy and grace will abound unto you, and your work and labor of love will be a success.

But a discouraged mother says: "I had a good boy, but his wicked associates have led him astray. They jeered and laughed, and persecuted him, until he grew ashamed of his mother's apron-string. I am afraid my boy is ruined forever?" Indeed! Bad company has ruined your boy! And pray what right had your boy to go into bad company? The apron-string, properly used, keeps the children in security against all such dangers. The safety of your children is in keeping them in good society. This is a delicate and difficult work, I will admit, but it is not an impossibility.

There are right principles and good associations among the children and the youth of any given community, as well as among the grown people. If we did not have the former, we could not have

the latter. It is then not necessary that the children of any given parents should go into bad company, so as to be demoralized by it. There is a better way and a better place for them. Keep them in the good company that God has provided for them. Hurtful company must be avoided. Better never go into society than to be defiled by it.

In every community in this Christian land of ours are to be found boys and girls in their teens and younger, whose characters and lives are known to be wicked. But good children need not be partakers with them of their evil deeds nor necessarily led astray by them. The rotten apron-string will account for much of what is wrong in the children. Many parents locate the cause and occasion of sin, and its consequent evils in their children, too far from home. Children are a sacred trust that must be sacredly guarded, and one of the principal pavilions of safety to them is the apron-string of a good mother.

CHAPTER V.

On Joining the Church When Young.

CHILDREN old enough to go to the day-school are old enough to enter the school of Christ, and that means membership in the Church of God. The fold is the place for the flock of sheep, and that includes the lambs. And so there are children in the flock of the Good Shepherd. And the lambs of the flock have the same care and protection as the sheep.

The Master said to Peter: "Feed my lambs." Again he said: "Feed my sheep." Then, including the entire flock of sheep and lambs, he said: "Feed my sheep." There is a significance in this order not to be mistaken. Children have a right to a place in the Church, and let no one delay or hinder them. To close the door against them would be like turning the lambs out of the fold.

Christ says: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." Again he says: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." So it would seem that little children are charter members, and the model to

adult believers. Grown persons may well pattern after the simplicity of faith in little children. It is marvelous with what confidence they will cling to the object of their affections. And that they may, and when properly taught do, love God cannot be denied. Instances of this kind are not wanting, even in children under five years of age. I am always glad to see children, however young, join the Church. In every such instance there is joy in the presence of the angels of God in heaven; and shall I not rejoice?

Some thirty years ago a small boy about eleven years of age joined the Church at Fayette, Mo. He was among the youngest of the sixty converts at the meeting. He joined in the quiet of an afternoon service as he was returning home from college. After the congregation had returned to their homes, as is usual on such occasion, the question was asked by anxious ones not at the meeting: "Did any one join the Church this afternoon?" And this I imagine was the answer: "No, no one. O yes, I remember now; there was a little boy joined—Eugene R. Hendrix." The answer was given in such way as to indicate clearly that but little importance was attached to the event. It was only a child, and at the time the Church and community thought but little about it.

But what of the child since? He has grown to

be a man, and during these years he has also grown in the knowledge and love of God. He has attained the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus. Like the large majority of children who come into the Church early, he has made a good record of fidelity and usefulness.

After taking a full college course, including theology and Biblical literature, he entered the itinerant ministry, and for years was an active, successful worker. Later we find him President of Central College, at Fayette, Mo., the place of his nativity. Here he labored, as he had done in the work of the ministry, with great fidelity and efficiency. From this important and great work he was called to the episcopacy. As a bishop in the Church of God he is deservedly popular, as he is abundant in labors and usefulness. He is held in high esteem by the whole Church for his works' sake.

It was a wise thing in him to have joined the Church when but a youth, and it is the part of wisdom in other children to follow his example. Only a few persons in a generation can hope to attain to the eminence he has reached, but all will be the better by joining the Church and leading a religious life while young.

CHAPTER VI.

Moral and Legal Rights.

IN a Christian land moral and legal rights are supposed to harmonize. That they should ever be in conflict seems an absurdity and a contradiction. But nothing is more common or more destructive of human happiness, within certain prescribed limits. To secure the ends of wholesome law and good government legal enactments should be based on moral rights. This is the only security to person or property. Any legal enactment in conflict with moral principles is a nullity, and ought to be so treated.

God is alike the author of moral law and civil government. "The powers that be are ordained of God." But God cannot contradict himself. Any legal enactment, therefore, which contradicts God and violates moral rights is destructive of the peace and welfare of the commonwealth. Making things legally right which are morally wrong antagonizes the moral and civil governments of God.

The alternative now is to either obey God or man, for no one can serve two masters. Individuals and corporate bodies alike are forced to a choice.

They must stand on the one side or the other. The whisky question, one of the live issues of the day, may serve further to illustrate and enforce these principles. It is a legal right to sign a petition for saloon license, but it is a moral wrong, and the parties involved are forced to take sides. It is a great moral wrong to sell whisky and other intoxicants as a beverage, but it is a legal right. Judged by these facts and principles, saloonists are honorable, upright men, law-abiding and good citizens; but from a moral stand-point they are the greatest of sinners. Strange inconsistency! they stand justified of man, but condemned of God. The moral government of God is holy, just, and good, and to legislate against this government is to destroy the foundations both of civil and religious liberty. They that do such things are surely blinded by the god of this world, and know not what they do; and those who countenance, support, and perpetuate such legislation are the worst enemies to human happiness and prosperity. Aside from the Bible this statement is supported by every-day facts and occurrences, as observed and experienced in human life.

Once more: Revenues arising from the whisky traffic must be collected and disbursed by the proper officers. This is legally right, but morally wrong. Such money is the price of blood, the price of souls,

and honest, God fearing men will have nothing to do with it. To collect and disburse such a revenue is an abomination in the sight of God, and a calamity and disgrace to any Christian, civilized people. The officer is legally innocent, but morally guilty. And the guilt is his, not another man's. He cannot saddle it on the Government, for he does this thing willingly and of choice. Knowing all the facts in advance, he can decline the office, or, accepting it, he may refuse to obey the legal mandates which are in violation of moral rights. Any officer or citizen is justified in rebelling against the civil authorities if that authority is in violation of moral rights; but such rebellion must take the consequence. The full penalty of violated law must be inflicted; the violator of the law must be punished. This is the only security to any Government. The case of Daniel is a good illustration of this subject. The moral rights of Daniel gave him the privilege and made it his duty to pray daily, and several times a day, to his God. The civil authorities forbade his doing so for the space of thirty days on pain of death. But in violation of the royal statute Daniel continued to pray as aforetime, ready and willing to take the consequences. For his rebellion he knew full well that he would be cast into the den of lions, but he preferred innocence in the sight of God to the king's favor. As between a

moral right and legal wrong he did not hesitate to choose the right. And his was a wise choice, as the sequel shows, and is an example to all good men under like circumstances. He gave himself into the hands of the proper officer, and was cast into the den of lions, whose mouths were locked by an angel, so that they hurt him not. So much for fidelity to God. The Divine approval and protection are always upon those who do right, but the wicked are destroyed by their own wickedness. Certain and sometimes sudden destruction comes upon them, as in the case of Daniel's persecutors. They suffered the death they designed to inflict upon him. Cast into the den of lions, they were devoured ere they reached the bottom of the pit. Such is the end of sin, and it is a warning to transgressors. Let men beware who clamor for legal rights against God, moral principles, and religious duty. In this country the whisky devil has his den of lions, and all who pray to and worship another God must be cast into it. But we will not fear, knowing that in the end deliverance will come to the righteous, and that all the wicked shall be destroyed from the land. Their doom is already sealed, and the executioner stands at the door. But there is one hope left—a reprieve of life, liberty, and happiness to all who will henceforth fear God and keep his commandments.

CHAPTER VII.

A Pledge to Meet in Heaven.

THE following incident will serve to show the importance and some of the benefits of such a pledge. After preaching at Camp Branch, Warren County, Mo., and before dismissing the congregation, I proposed to take the hand of all who were willing, as a pledge that we would meet each other in heaven. Among those who accepted this proposition was a young Christian of more than ordinary intelligence and piety. About ten years after this she was taken suddenly and dangerously ill. The attending physician from the first thought her recovery doubtful. Soon all hope was gone, and for days her death was expected every hour. During this critical period of her illness she had a vision, which seemed to her as real as life itself. In this vision she seemed to pass through the portals of death, and up the shining way to glory and to God. She had reached one of the gates of the city on the west side, and was about to enter into the New Jerusalem. Looking back to earth for the last time, she saw her married sister, at whose house she had died, sitting and weeping amidst the

mournful scenes of death. Presently she looked up steadfastly toward heaven, as if to catch a glimpse of the departed spirit. There was a moment of time, and she used that moment to speak these memorable and comforting words: "Sister, do not weep for me; but do you tell Brother Cope that I have kept my pledge, and have safely reached my heavenly home." This was only in the imagination; but had the death been real, and if she could have done so, beyond any doubt she would have sent back this exact message.

I have taken hundreds—I suppose thousands—of similar pledges, first and last, and I am confidently expecting to meet those Christian friends in heaven, and to be refreshed and rest with them under the shade of the tree of life. Reader, shall you and I meet in heaven? I say, yes; by the grace of God I will meet you there, and we shall dwell together in the presence of God and the angels, and all the redeemed from earth, forever. If you shall answer, "Be it as thou wilt," the covenant is entered into between us; and God, who knoweth all hearts, shall witness and ratify the solemn vow; and if we keep it, heaven shall be our future and eternal home. That means that we shall be perfectly and eternally happy. In the language of the Christian poet:

Here's my heart, and here's my hand,
To meet you in that happy land.

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